



GOODNIGHT PUNPUN



2

INIO ASANO

PARENTAL ADVISORY
EXPLICIT
CONTENT

GOODNIGHT PUNPUN

2

Story and Art by INIO ASANO



GOODNIGHT PUNPUN

Part Three





CONTENTS

STORY THUS FAR...

Punpun, somehow, has become an unexceptional middle school student.

CAST OF CHARACTERS



PUNPUN ONODERA
Formerly known as Punpun Punyama. A choco pie-loving young man.



MAMA ONODERA
Punpun's mother. Her personality remains unchanged post-divorce.



YUICHI ONODERA
Mama's younger brother. Thirty-three years old. Lives with Punpun.



AIKO TANAKA
The girl Punpun loved in elementary school. They have had absolutely no contact for two years.



KOMATSU
Punpun's classmate. A proud natural righty and member of the badminton team.



SEKI
Punpun's classmate. Has a slightly alcoholic father.



SHIMIZU
Punpun's classmate. Childhood friend of Seki.



THIS GUY
Varsity member of the badminton team.



YUGAMI
The lawyer who handled Mama's divorce.



GIRL IN THE COFFEE SHOP
Uncle Yuichi thinks he remembers her from somewhere...?!

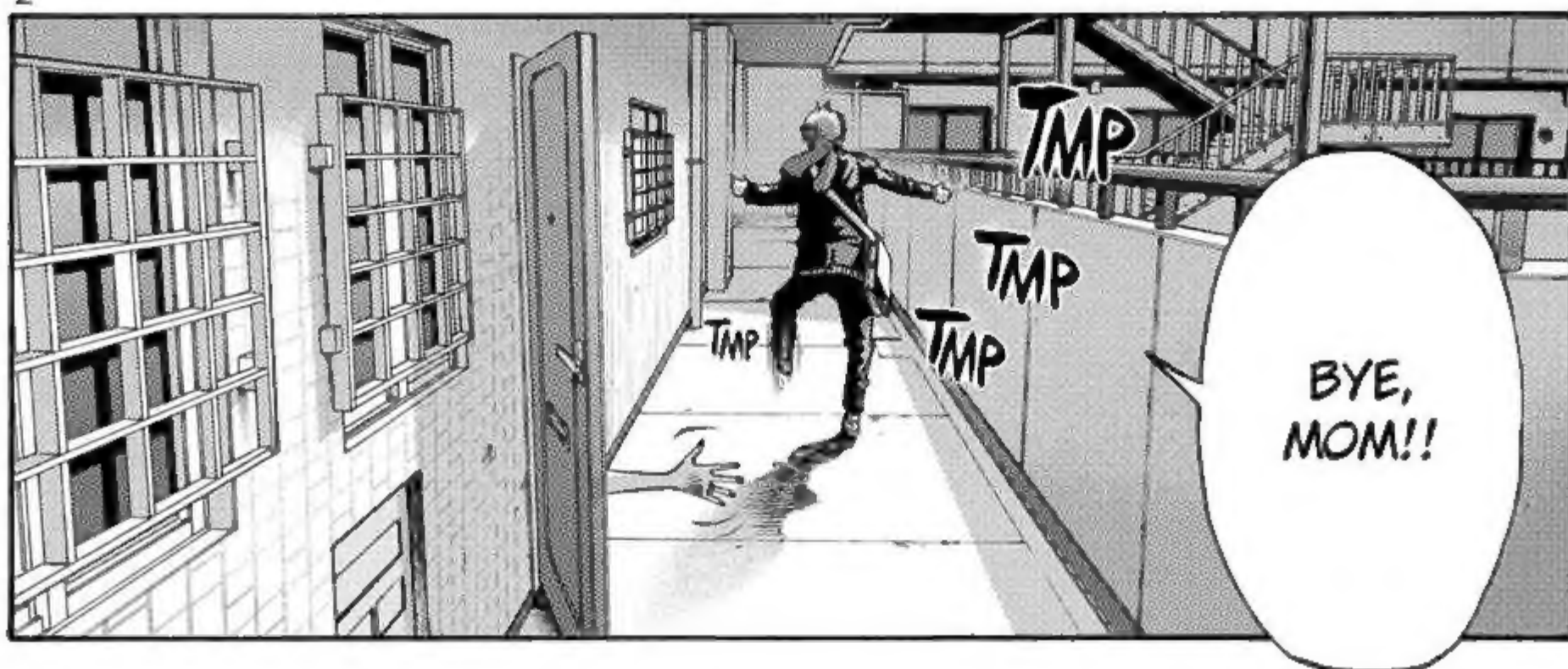
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2



SEKI, LISTEN
CAREFULLY—
I'M TELLING
YOU
SOMETHING
IMPORTANT.

GUIDANCE COUNSELOR







YOU
SHOULDN'T
ASSUME YOUR
EXPERIENCE IS
RELEVANT TO
EVERYONE.

ARE YOU
ALLOWED
TO JUST
TELL ME
PERSONAL
STUFF
LIKE
THAT?

AREN'T WE
SUPPOSED
TO BE
TALKING
ABOUT
ME?

OR ARE
YOU SAYING
THAT SMART
GROWN-UPS
ARE JUST
GOOD AT
CHANGING THE
SUBJECT?



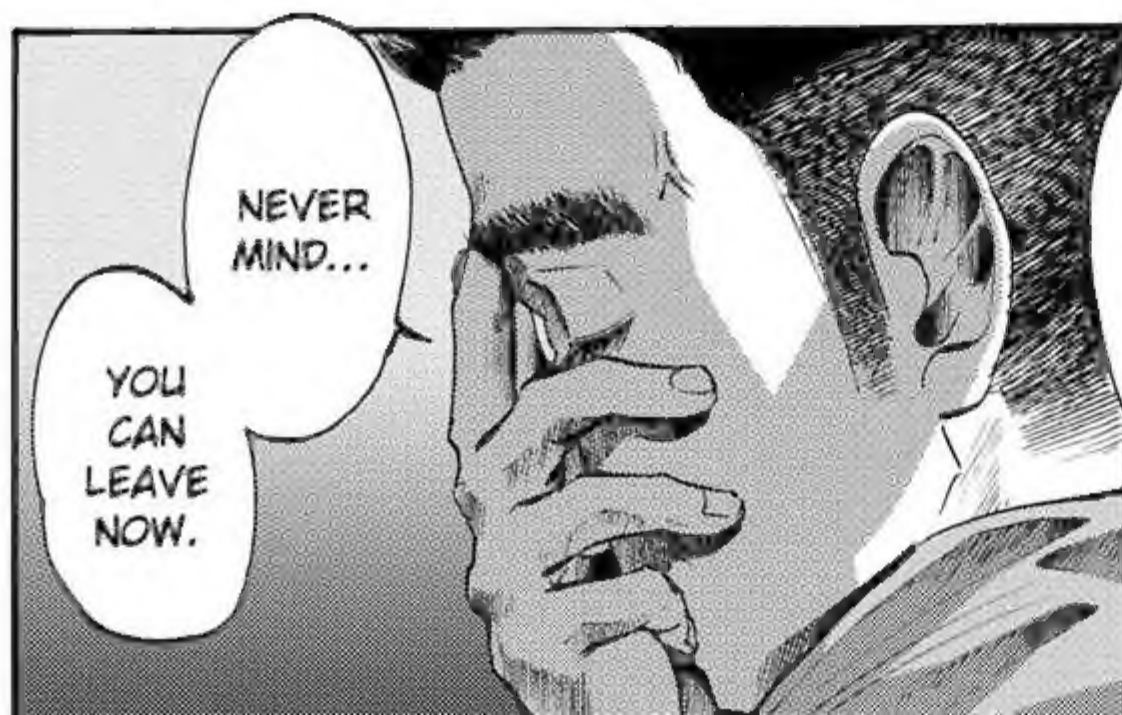
BUT MY
BOOZER DAD
IS WORSE
THAN I AM.

OKAY.



ALL
RIGHT,
I GET
IT.

WE'LL
SCHEDULE
A SPECIAL
MEETING
WITH YOUR
PARENTS TO
MAKE SURE
YOU TELL
THEM.



NEVER
MIND...

YOU
CAN
LEAVE
NOW.







SHIMIZU
WANTED
TO GIVE IT
TO ME!

THAT'S A
TOTAL LIE!
WHAT ARE
YOU TALKING
ABOUT?!



MONEY IS
SOMETHING
YOU WORK
FOR, RIGHT?



YOU'RE
ALWAYS
WANDERING
AROUND IN
YOUR BOGUS
SOLITUDE...

WHATEVER,
I DON'T
HAVE TO
STAND HERE
AND BE
LECTURED
BY A BONE-
HEAD LIKE
YOU!

W-
WHAT?!
I DON'T
GIVE A
SHIT ABOUT
YOUR
MORAL
PHILOSOPHY!

IDIOTS
SHOULDN'T
TRY TO BE
HEROES!

IT'S A
PERFECTLY
LEGITIMATE
EXAMPLE OF
SUPPLY AND
DEMAND!



THAT'S
NOT
WHAT
I'M
TALKING
ABOUT!



THAT'S
NOT IT...
AAARGH!

IF YOU
THINK
ABOUT
IT, IT'S
OBVIOUS.
AAARGH!





I DON'T
CARE THAT
YOU'RE A
GIRL.



YOU'RE
NEXT.



YOU'RE,
LIKE, SO
GROSS!!

I
DON'T
EVEN
KNOW
WHAT'S
GOING
ON...

HA HA.
WHY...?

I WAS
JUST, LIKE,
WATCHING.



WHO

OSH



ACTUALLY,
SO
PATHETIC.

THAT'S
SUPPOSED
TO SCARE
ME?



LIKE,
SUPER
PATHETIC
...

IT'S
LIKE,
WHAT
ARE YOU
EVEN
TALKING
ABOUT?







...TO BE
BETTER
FRIENDS
WITH
THEM...

I JUST
WANTED
...

HEY,
SEKI...

...I...



I
GET IT
NOW.

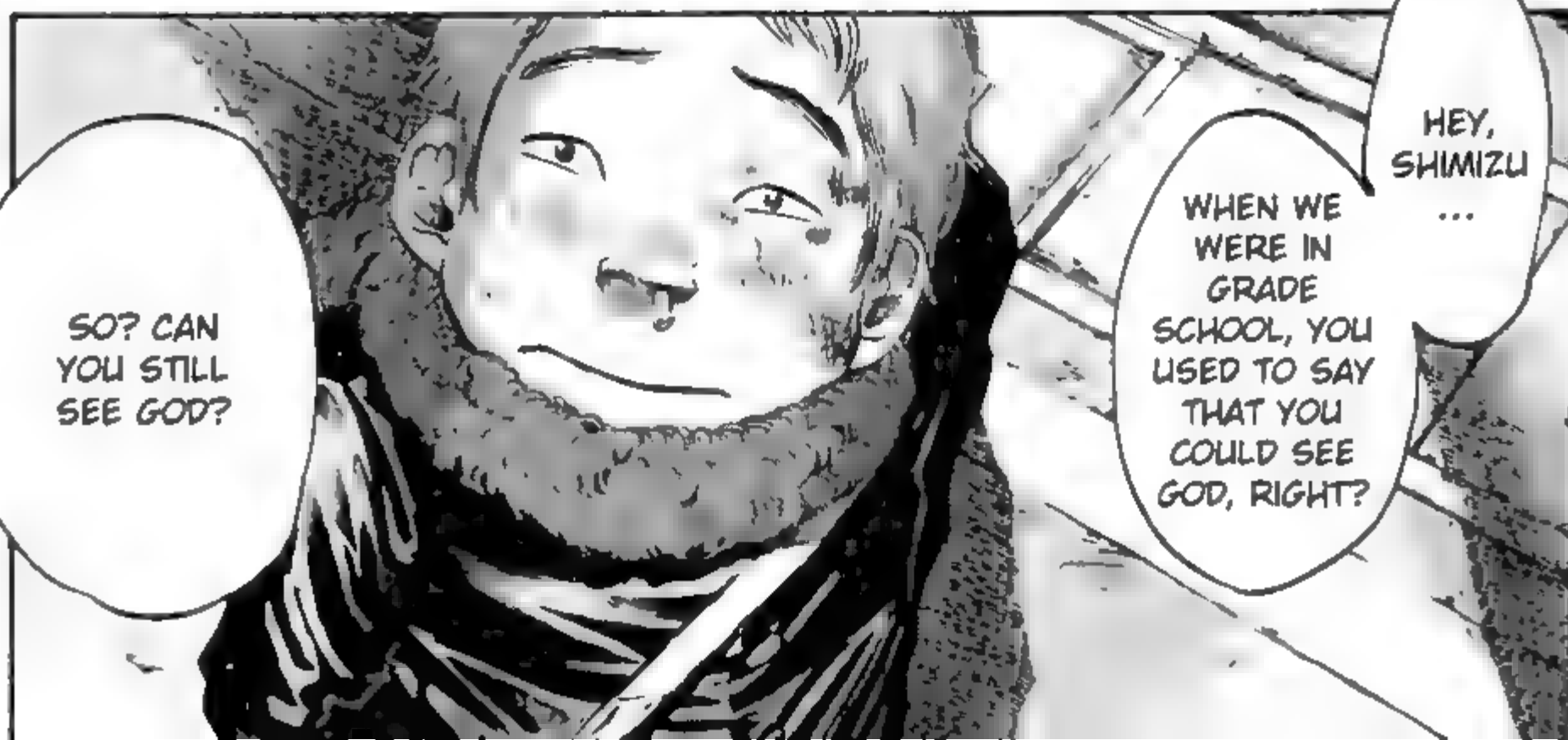
I'M
STUPID,
YOU'RE
STUPID,
WE'RE ALL
STUPID...

IMPOS-
SIBLE.



WHY
DON'T
THINGS
EVER
WORK
OUT?

AAAHH...



SO? CAN
YOU STILL
SEE GOD?

WHEN WE
WERE IN
GRADE
SCHOOL, YOU
USED TO SAY
THAT YOU
COULD SEE
GOD, RIGHT?

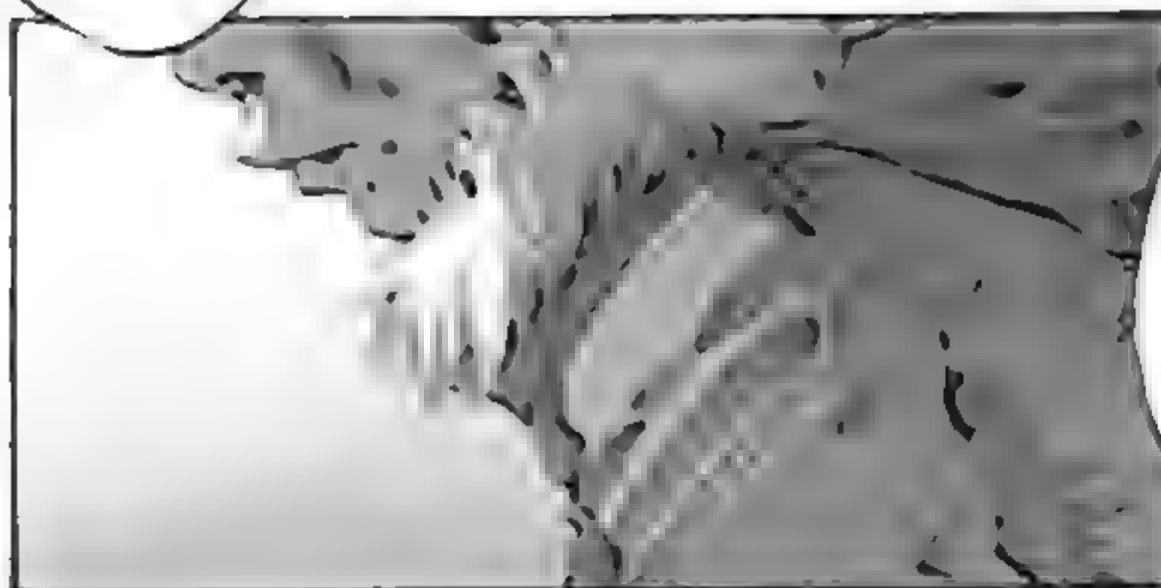
HEY,
SHIMIZU
...





SEKI...

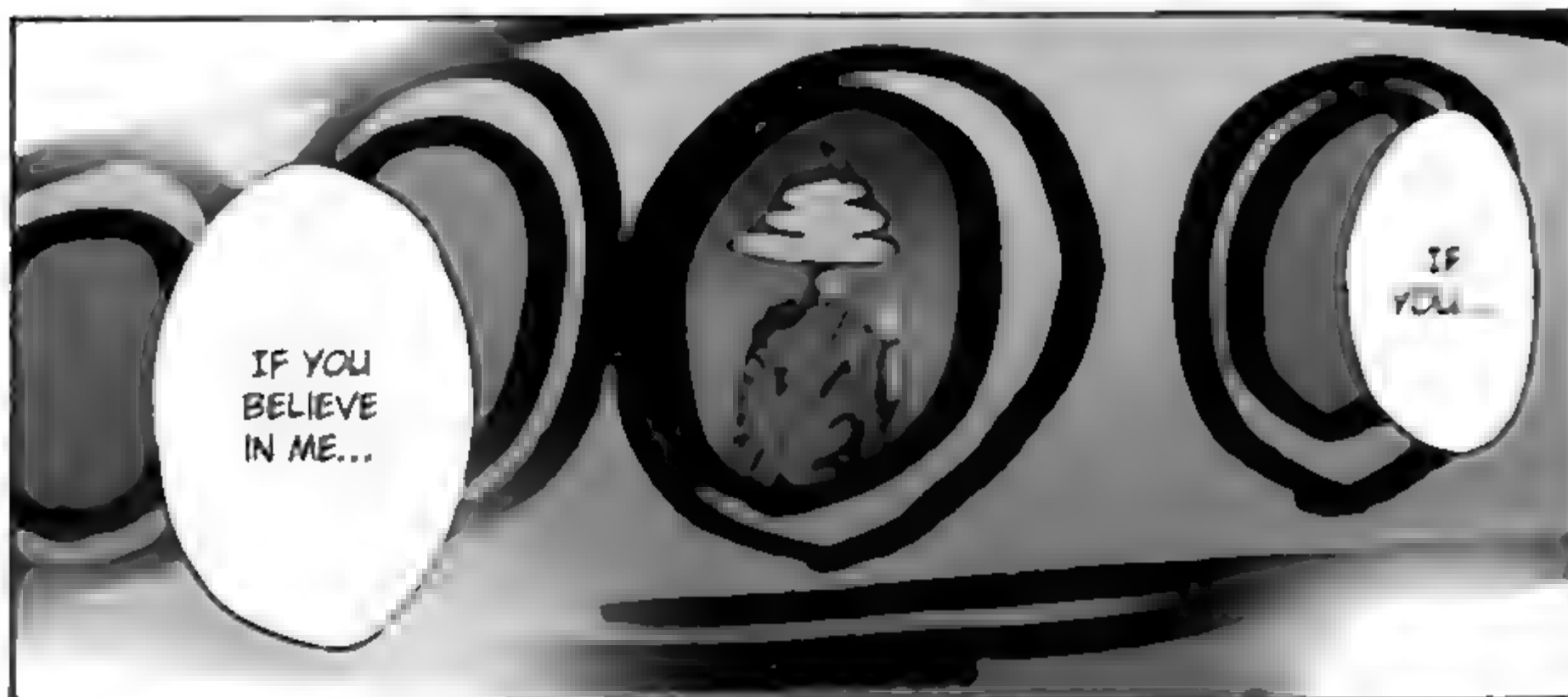
DON'T YOU
EVER GET
LONELY
BEING BY
YOURSELF
ALL THE
TIME?



PEOPLE
JUST NEED
TO RELY
ON THEM-
SELVES.

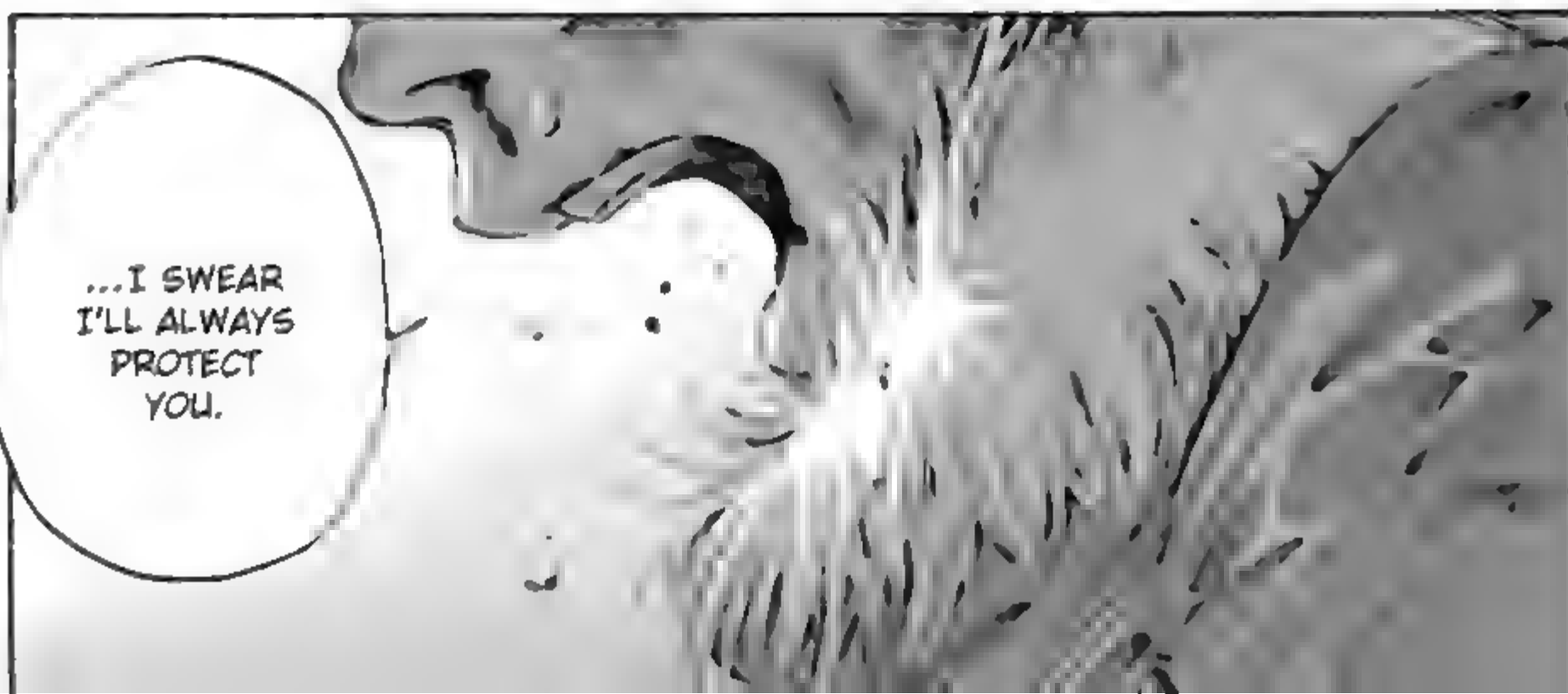


I
FIGURED.
IF GOD
ACTUALLY
EXISTED,
THE WORLD
WOULDN'T
BE LIKE
THIS.



IF YOU
BELIEVE
IN ME...

IF
YOU...



...I SWEAR
I'LL ALWAYS
PROTECT
YOU.







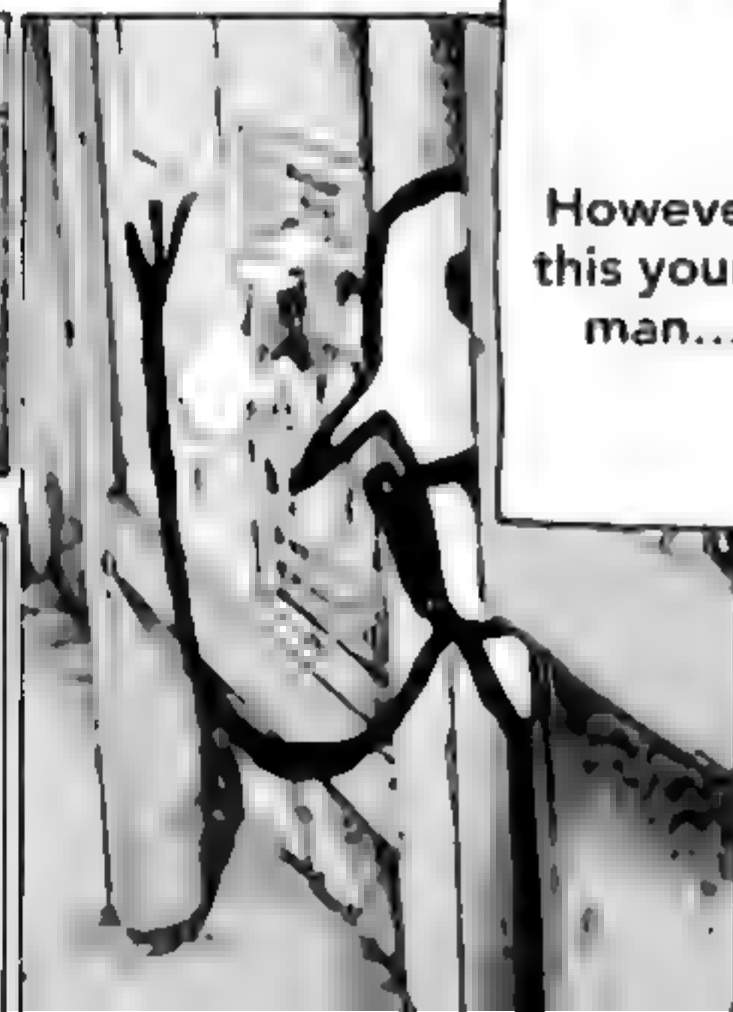
So this
middle
school kid
named
Punpun...



...firmly
believed
that Aiko
Tanaka, the
girl with the
small warm
hands, was
his destiny.



...who had
nurtured
his love very
patiently for
more than
two years...



However,
this young
man...



— was
now
faced
with...



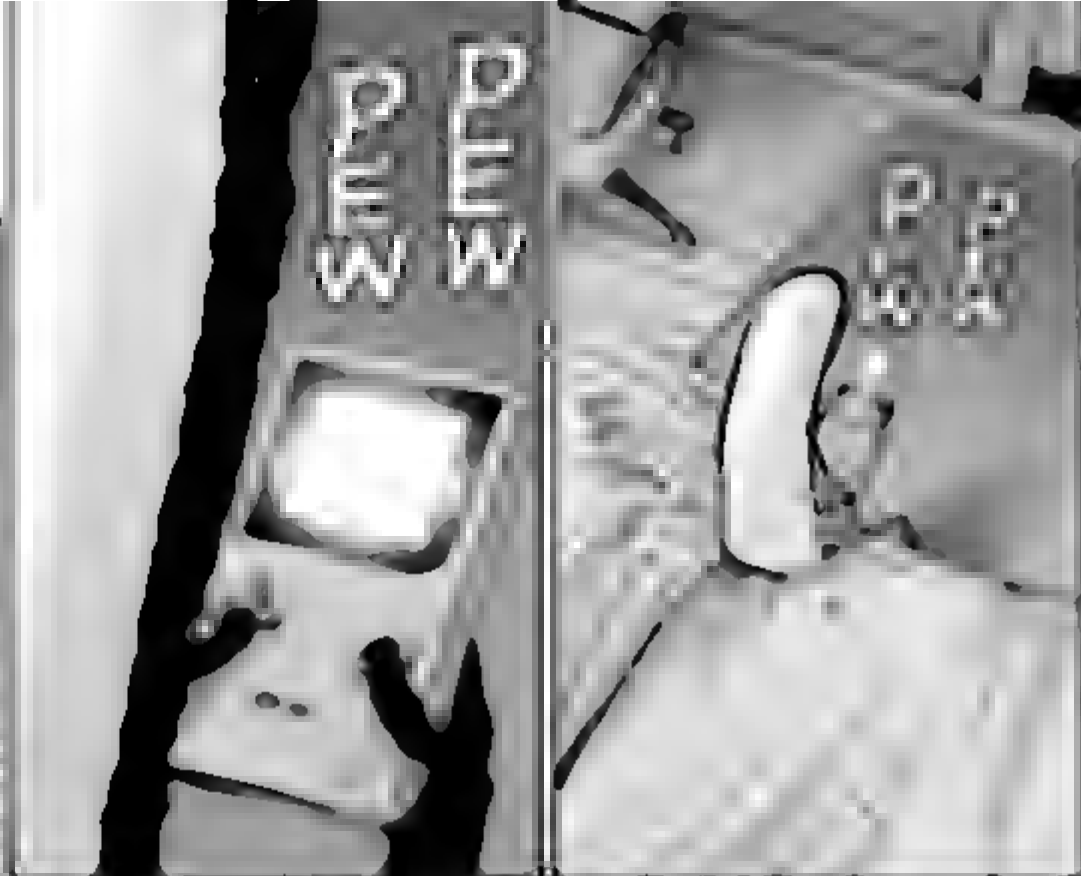
— an
immutable
fact!



**It's
hell!**







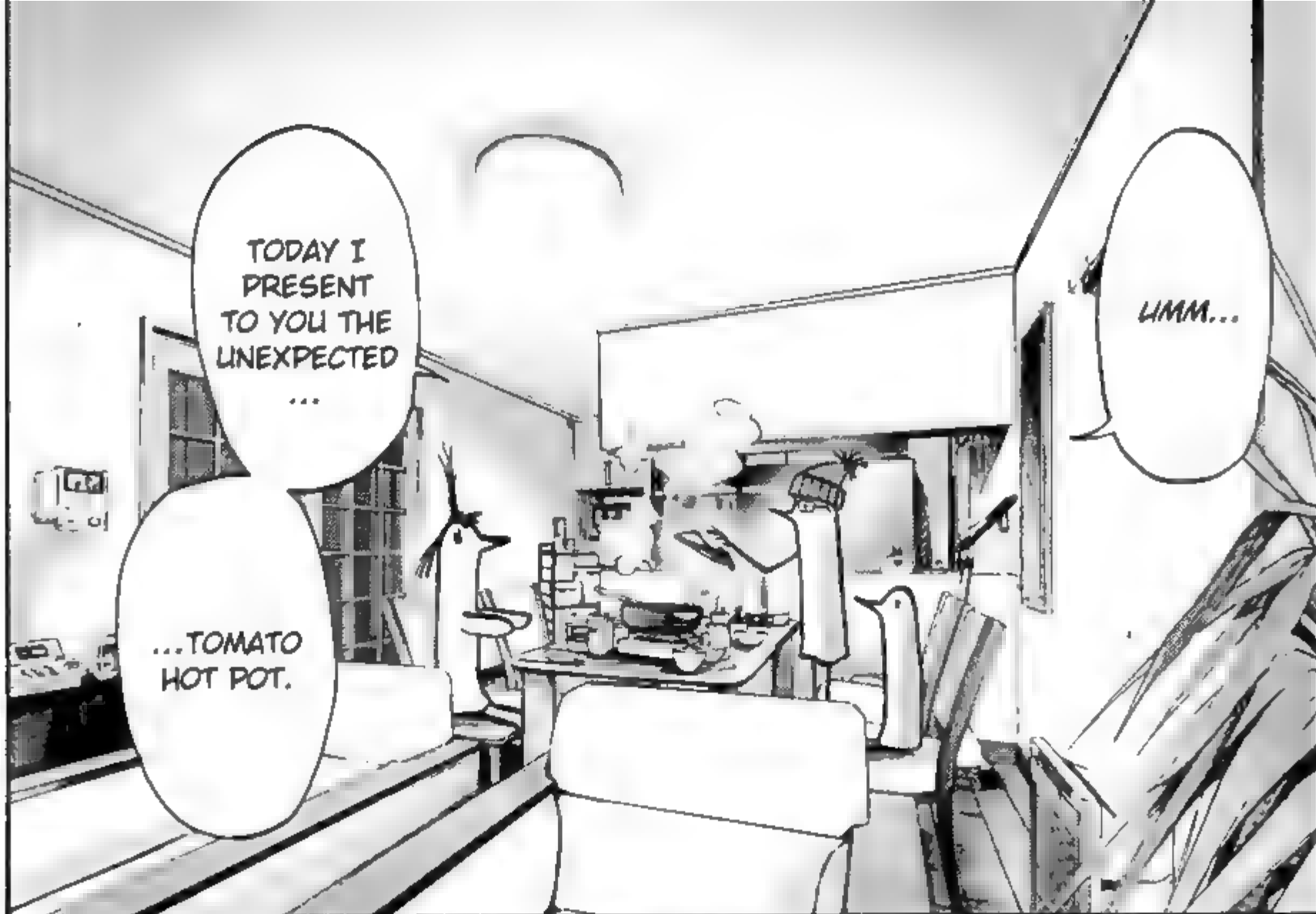
Punpun
decided
to forget
everything.

"If Aiko
is happy,
that's
all that
matters..."



That was
impossible.





TODAY I
PRESENT
TO YOU THE
UNEXPECTED
...

UHM...

...TOMATO
HOT POT.



...I
REALLY
LOVE
YOU!

OH...
OHH,
I...

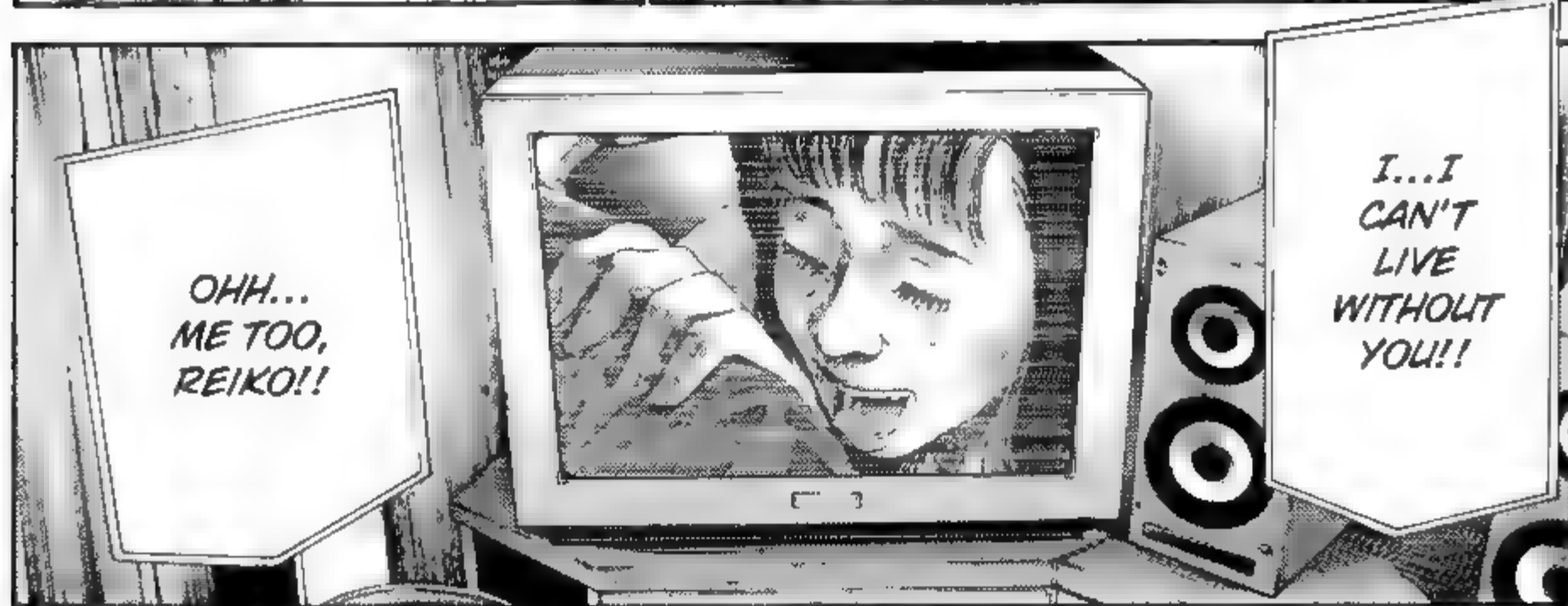


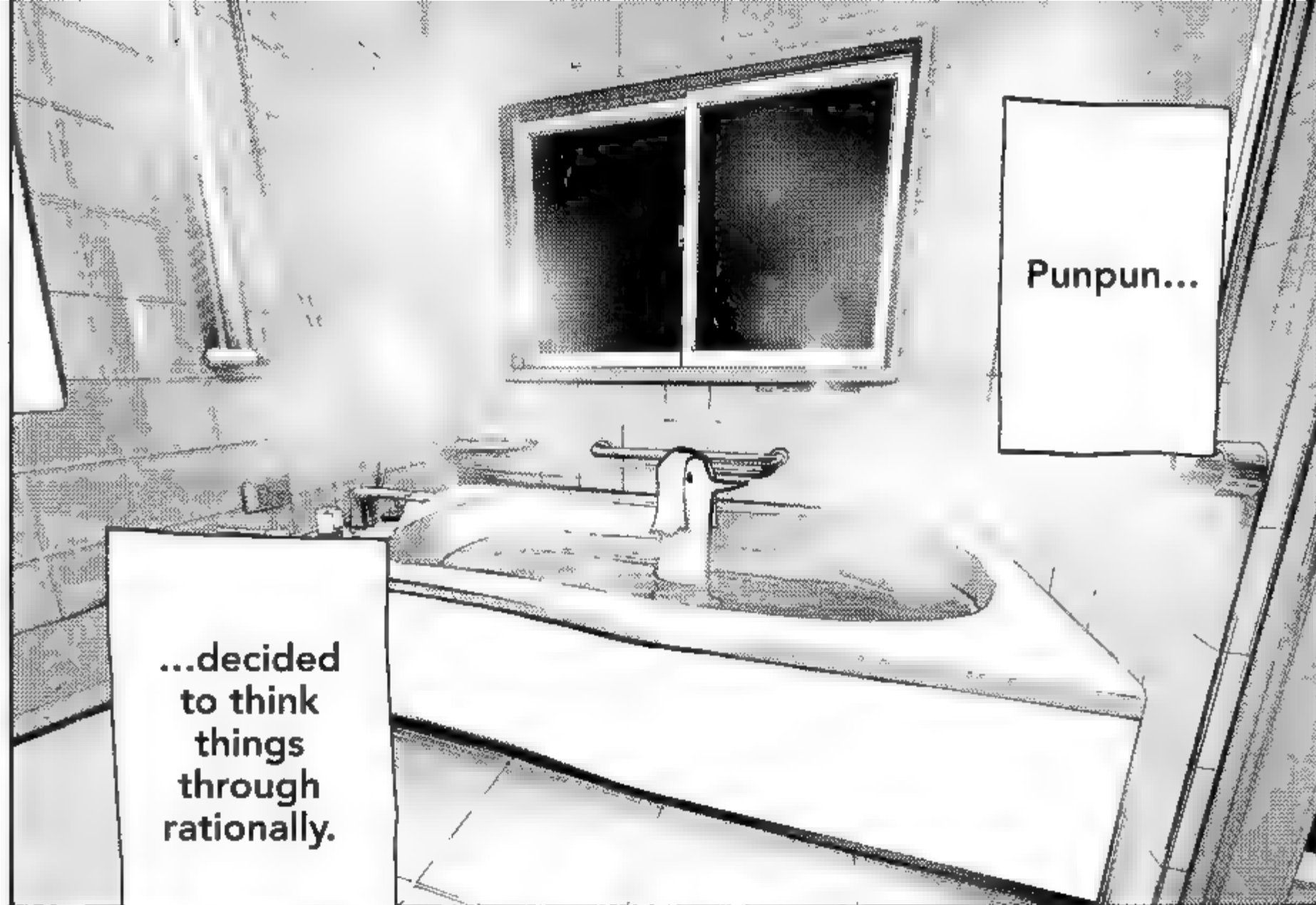
...BUT IT'S
ANOTHER
TREACHEROUS
DINNER HOUR
HERE...

WELL...
I GUESS
THERE'S
NO POINT
BRINGING
IT UP
NOW...

SO HOW'S
WORK? ARE
YOU HAVING
FUN?

I
LOVE
YOU!

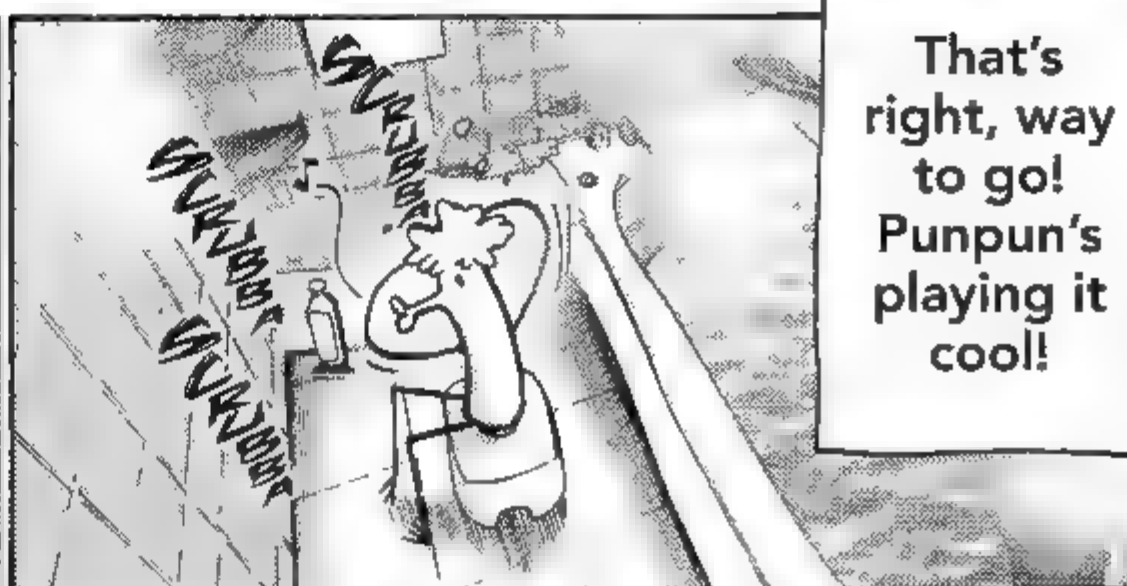




...decided
to think
things
through
rationally.

Punpun...

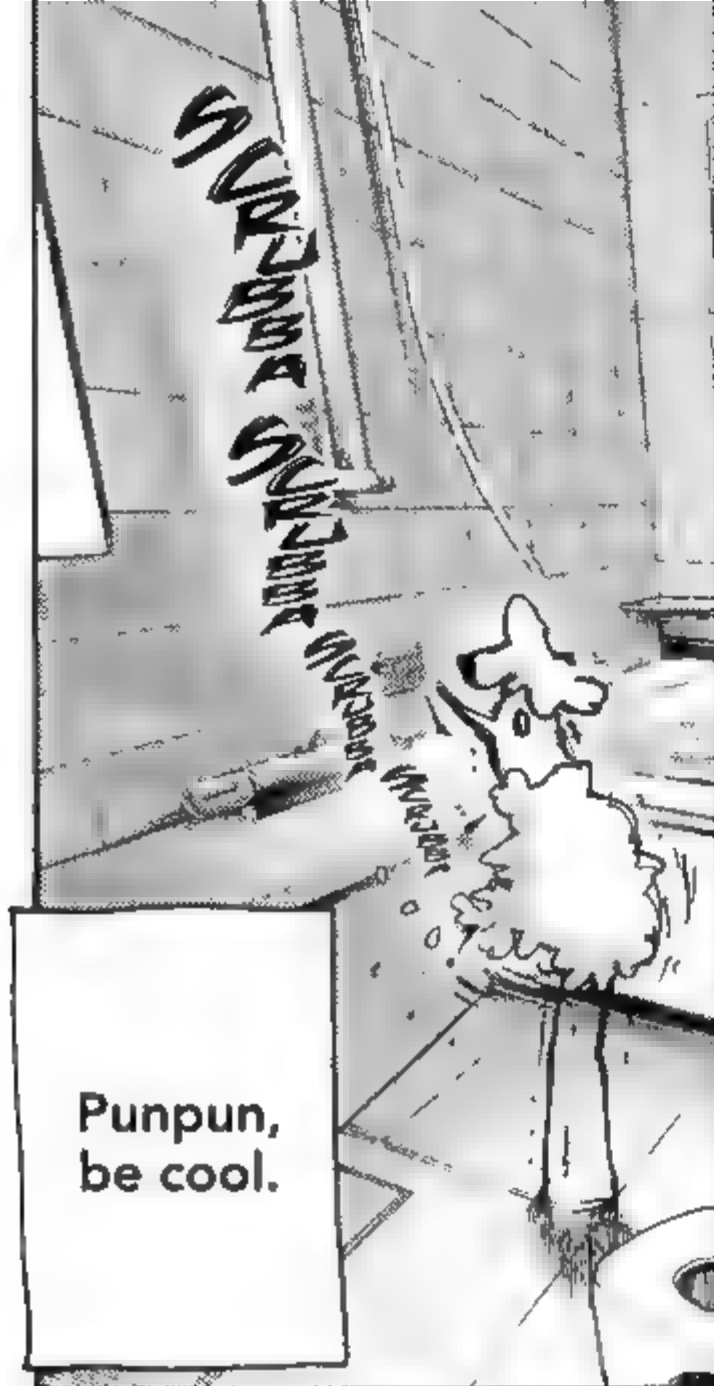
There was no
positive proof
that Aiko and
Yaguchi were
going out!



That's
right, way
to go!
Punpun's
playing it
cool!

That's
right,
Punpun's
super-
cool!

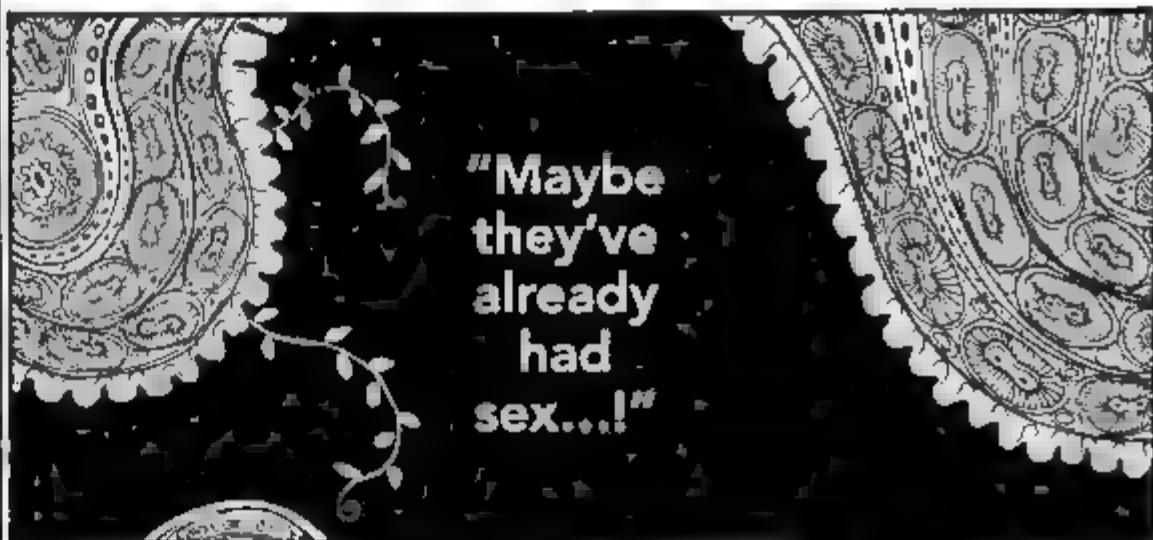
"Even if they
are going out,
there's no way
Aiko is that
into Yaguchi!"



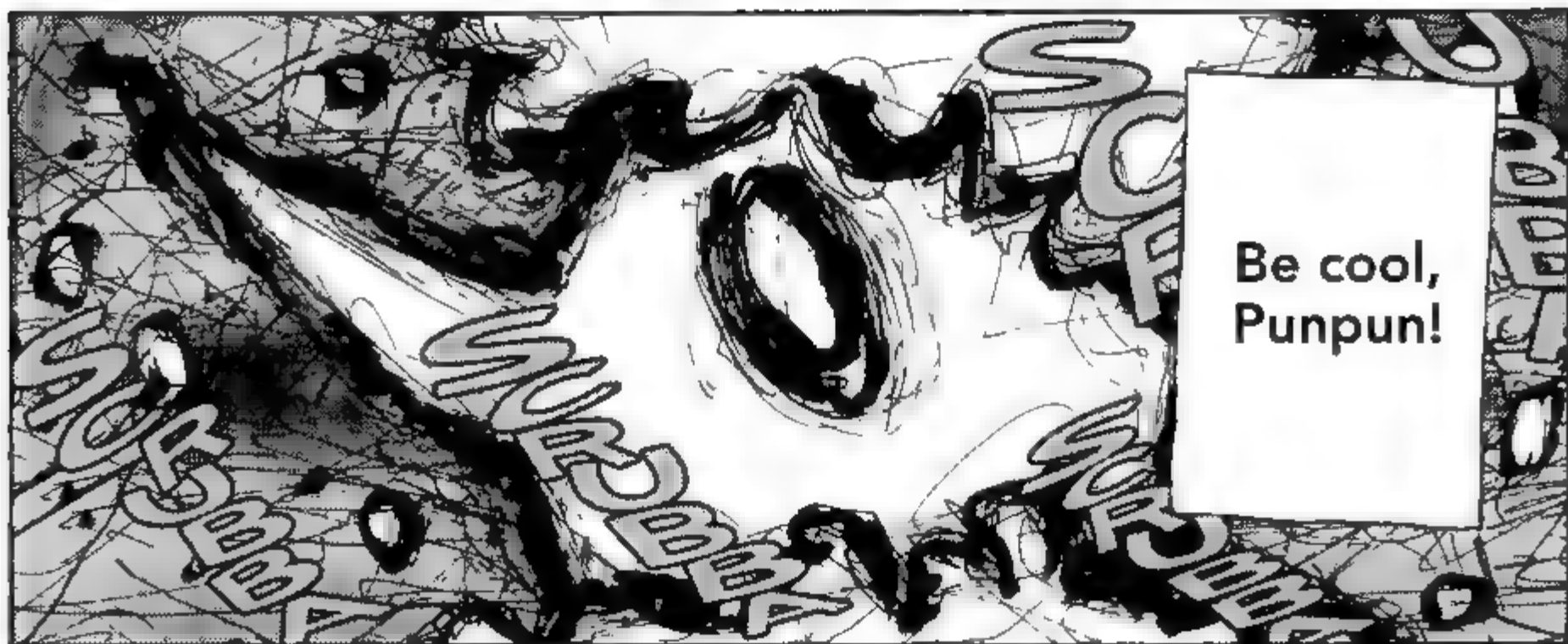
Punpun,
be cool.



"I wonder
if Aiko has
done stuff like
kissing
already."



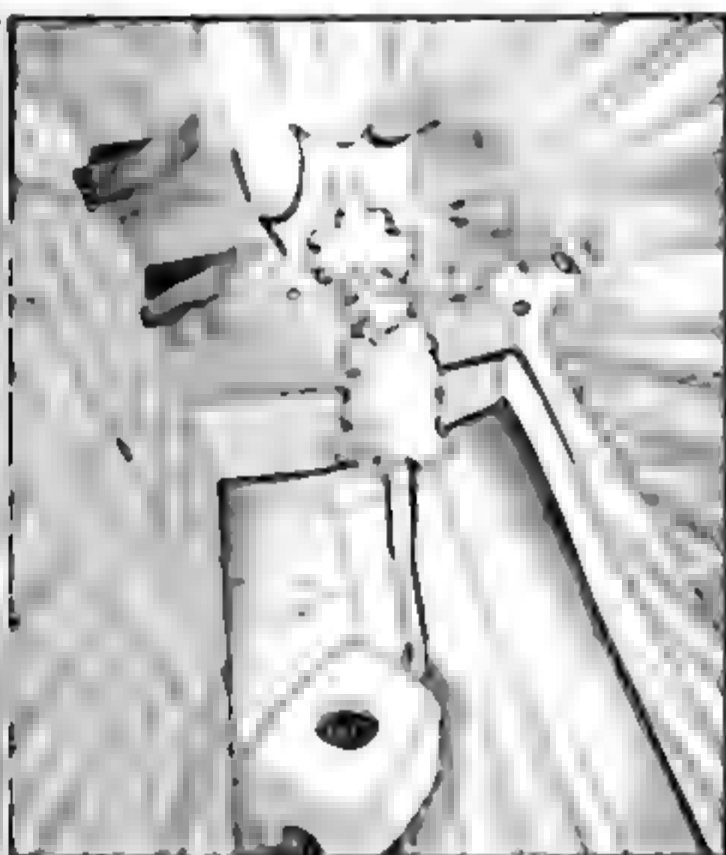
"Maybe
they've
already
had
sex...!"

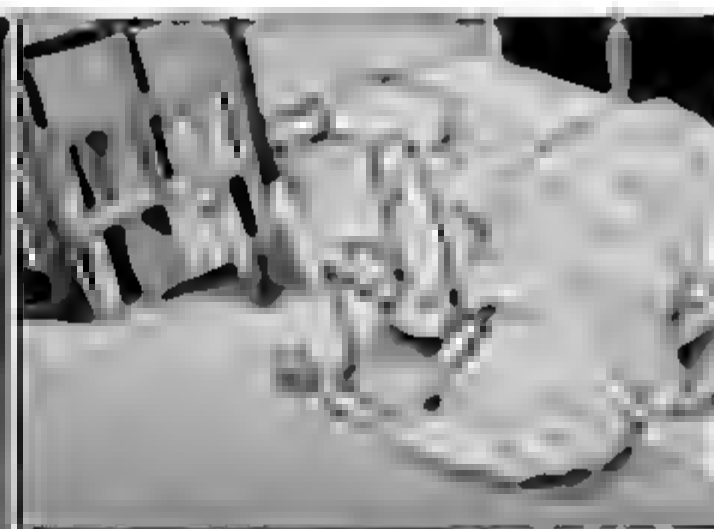


Be cool,
Punpun!

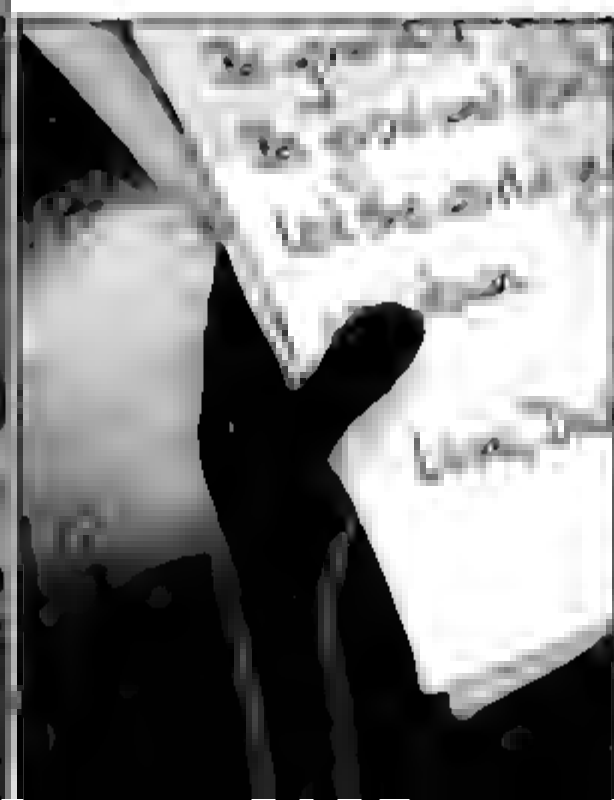


Be
cool!!





The letter was from Punpun's dad, who had returned to Fukushima Prefecture and was working as a security guard at the water department.

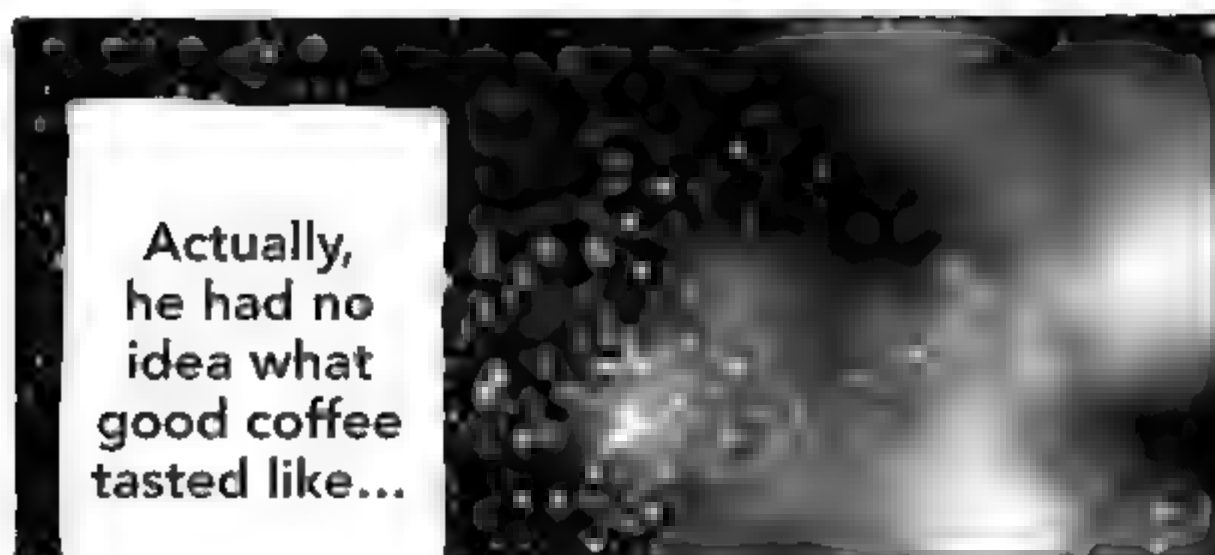


It covered the usual banal subjects—the Yomiuri Giants and outer space.

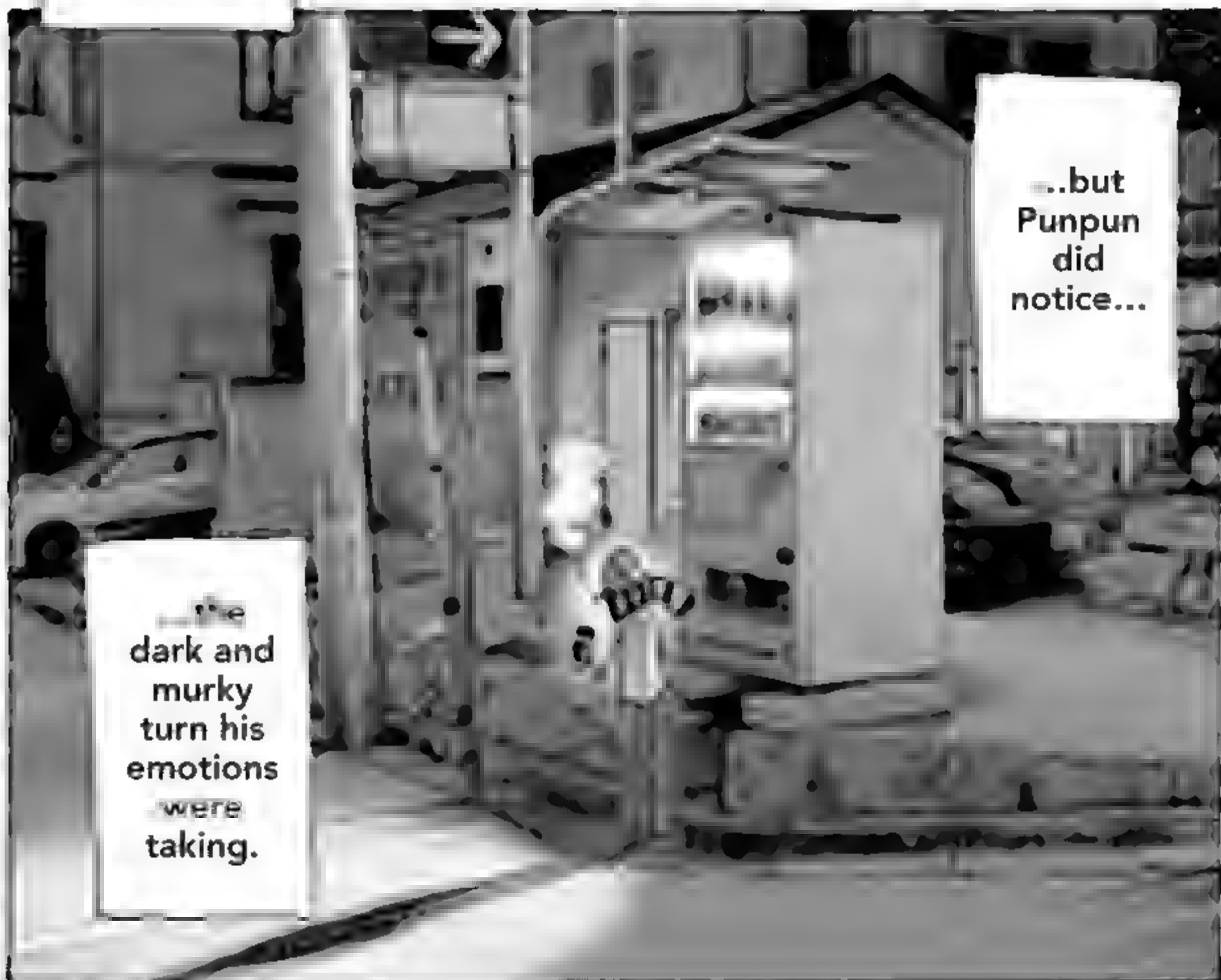
It ended in the usual way.

...and the
silence
stabbed
deep into
Punpun's
ears.

The winter
sky was
crystalline

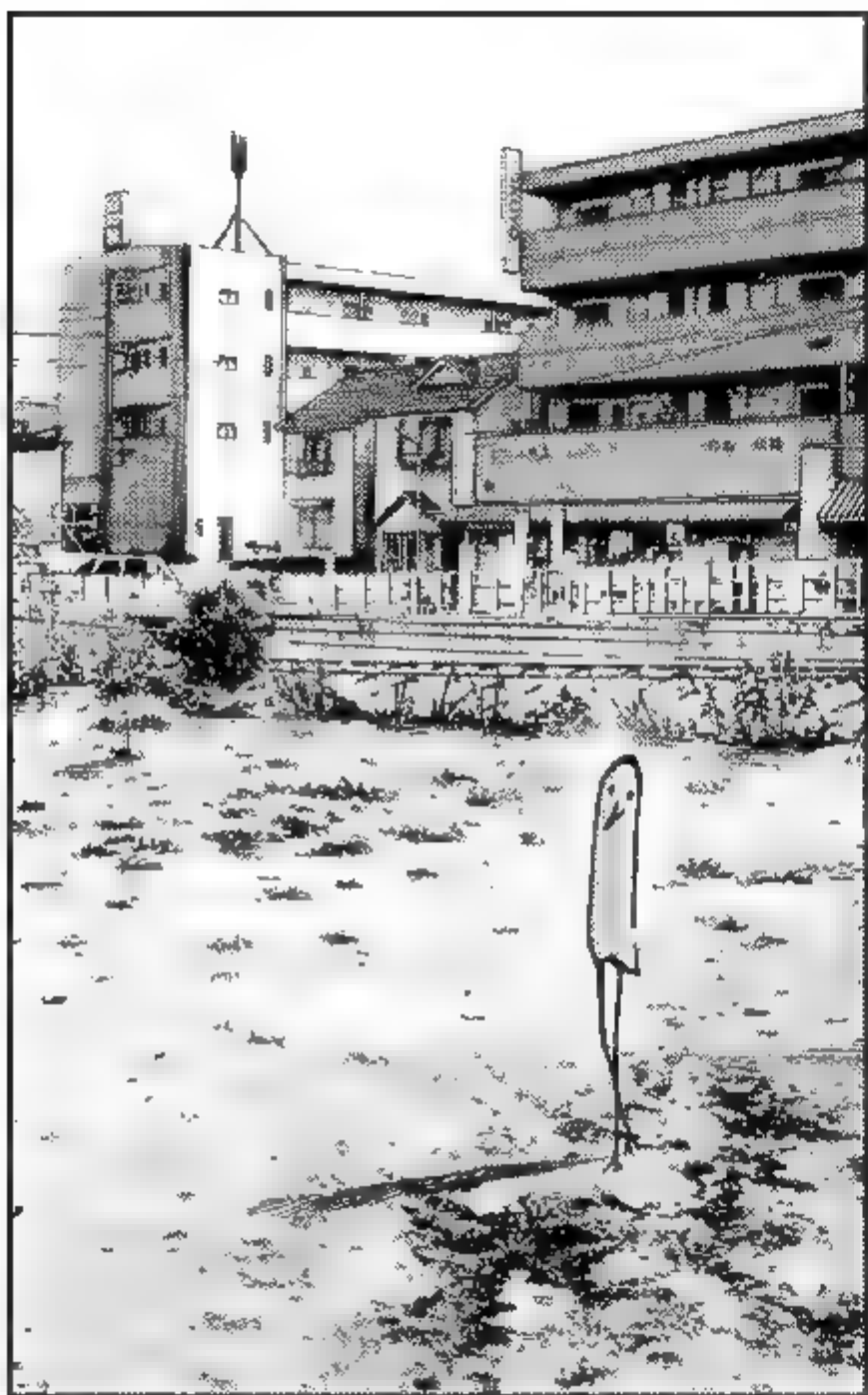


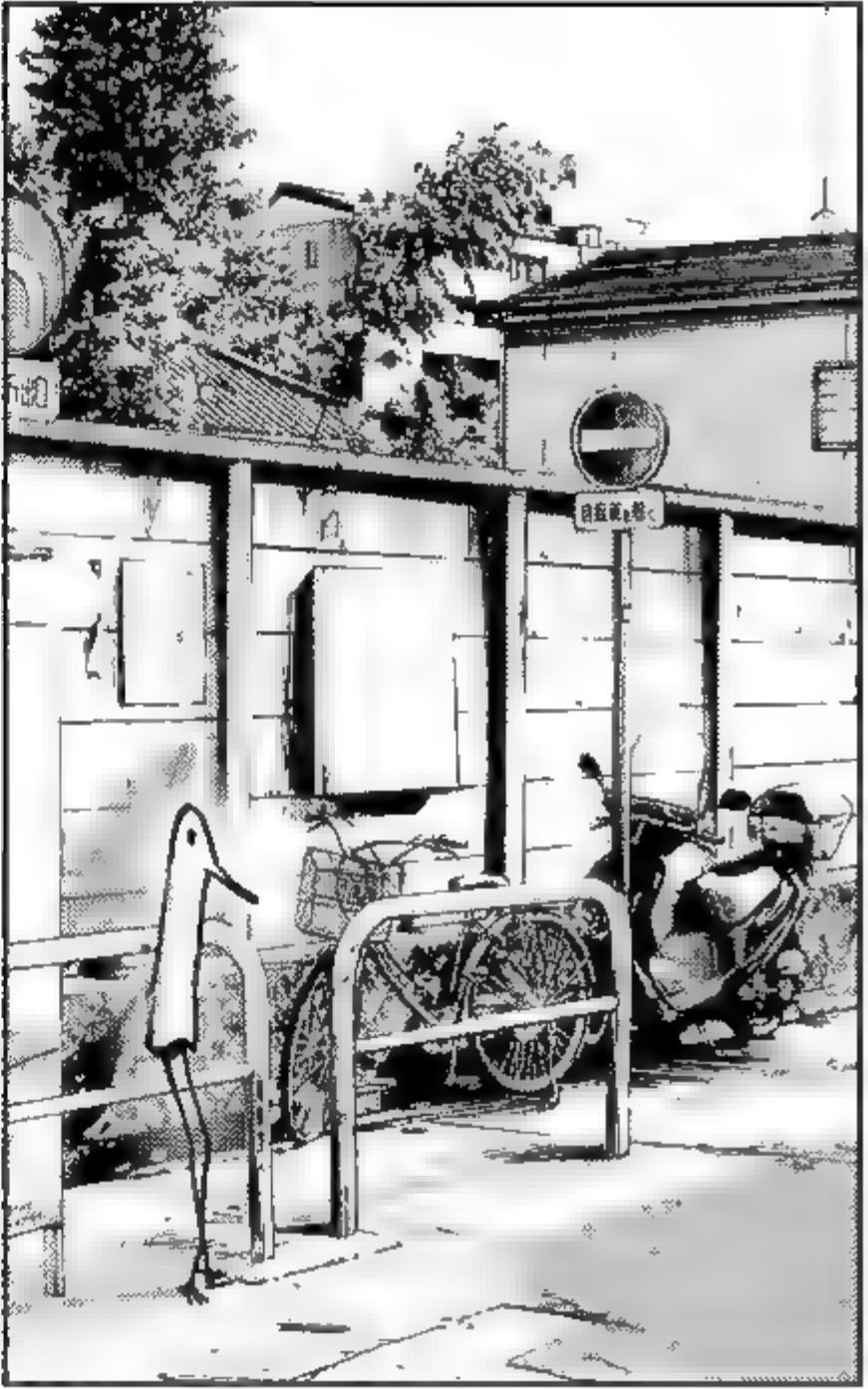
Actually,
he had no
idea what
good coffee
tasted like...

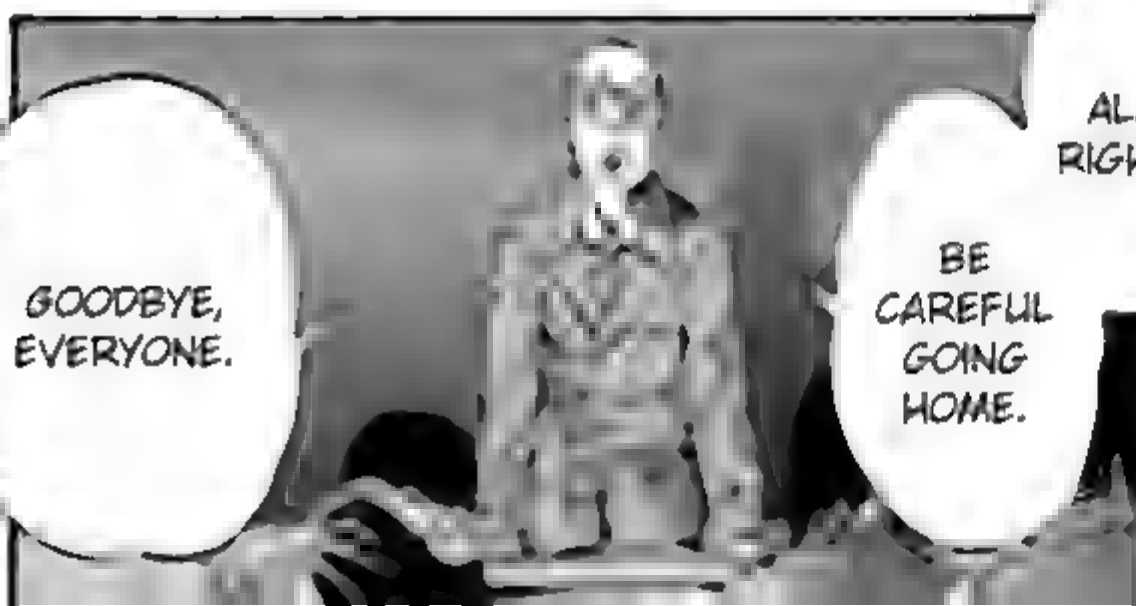


...the
dark and
murky
turn his
emotions
were
taking.

...but
Punpun
did
notice...









YOU'RE THE
ONE WHO SAID
WE SHOULD
ALL GO AWAY
FOR SPRING
BREAK.

SERIOUSLY,
HURRY UP
AND DECIDE!



BRRR

IT'S
SO
COLD.

I SHOULD
HAVE GONE
TO PRIVATE
SCHOOL.



I NEED
TO GO TO
PRACTICE.
CAN I DO
IT TOMOR-
ROW?

OH
GEEZ!!



WHEN
DID YOU
BECOME
SUCH A
JOCK?!
HERE,
GIVE THAT
TO ME!

KOMATSU,
DO YOU
REALLY
LOVE
BADMINTON
THAT
MUCH?!



YEAH,
HE'S
TOTALLY
YOUR
TYPE,
SONO.

HUH
?

...
YAGUCHI?
FROM BAD-
MINTON?

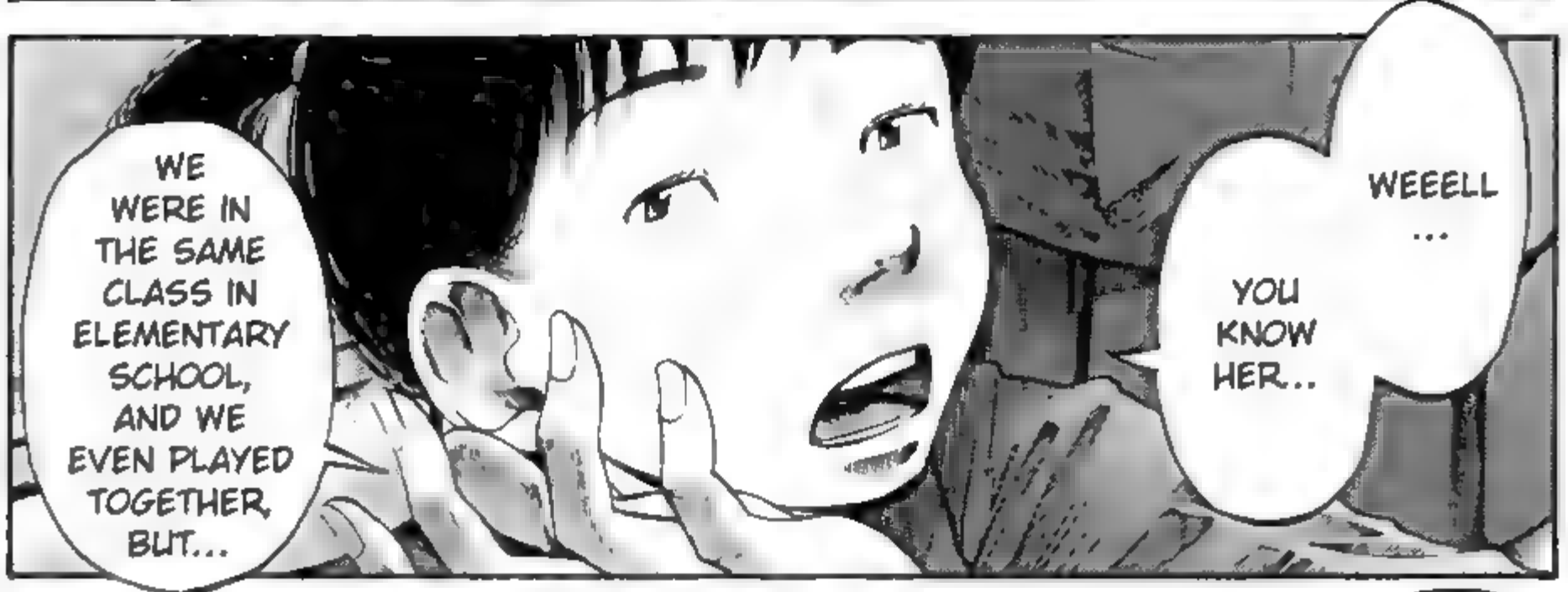
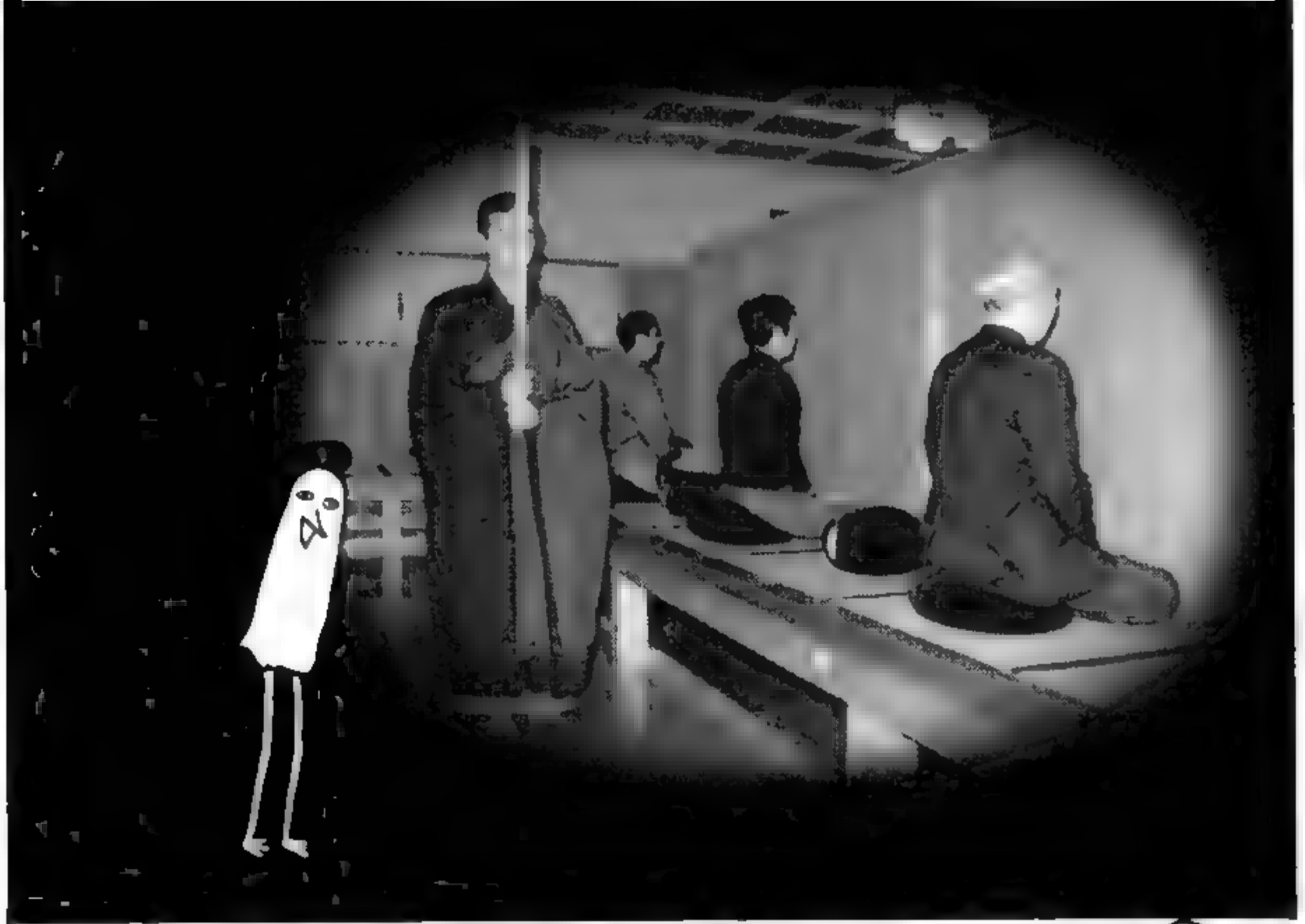


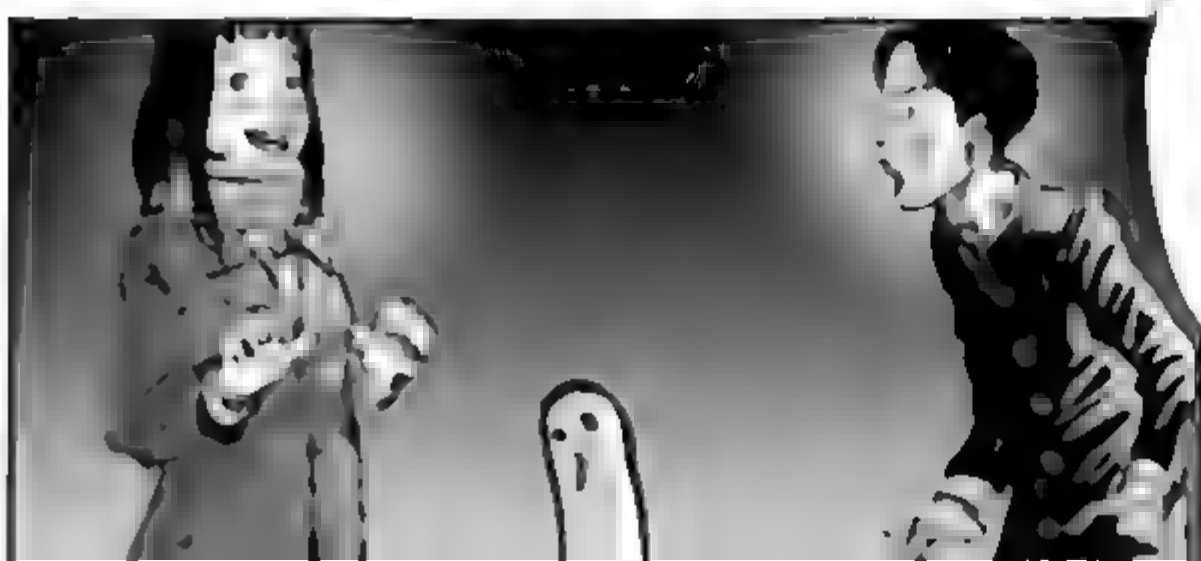
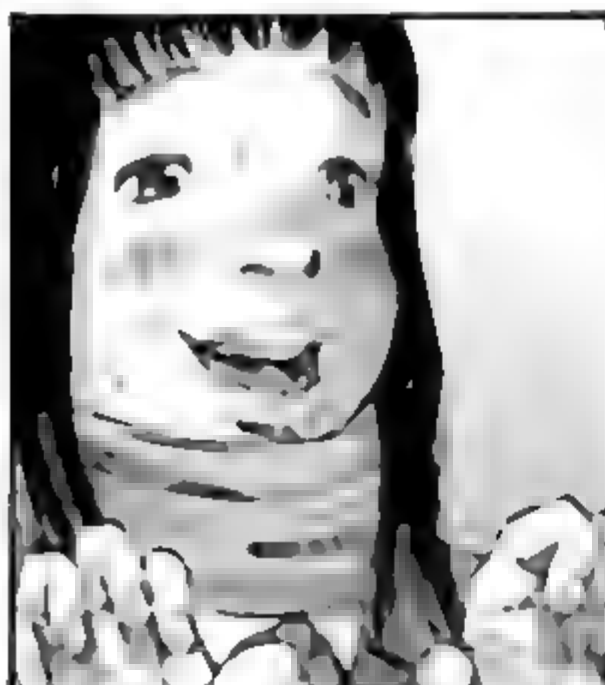
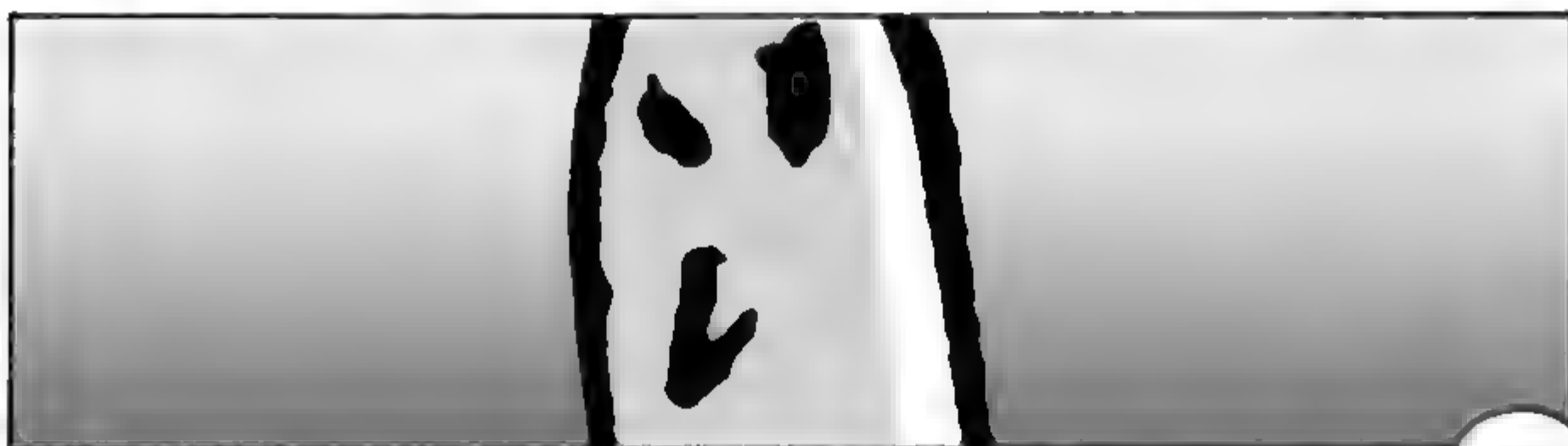
IT'S
LIKE A KING
OYSTER
MUSHROOM.

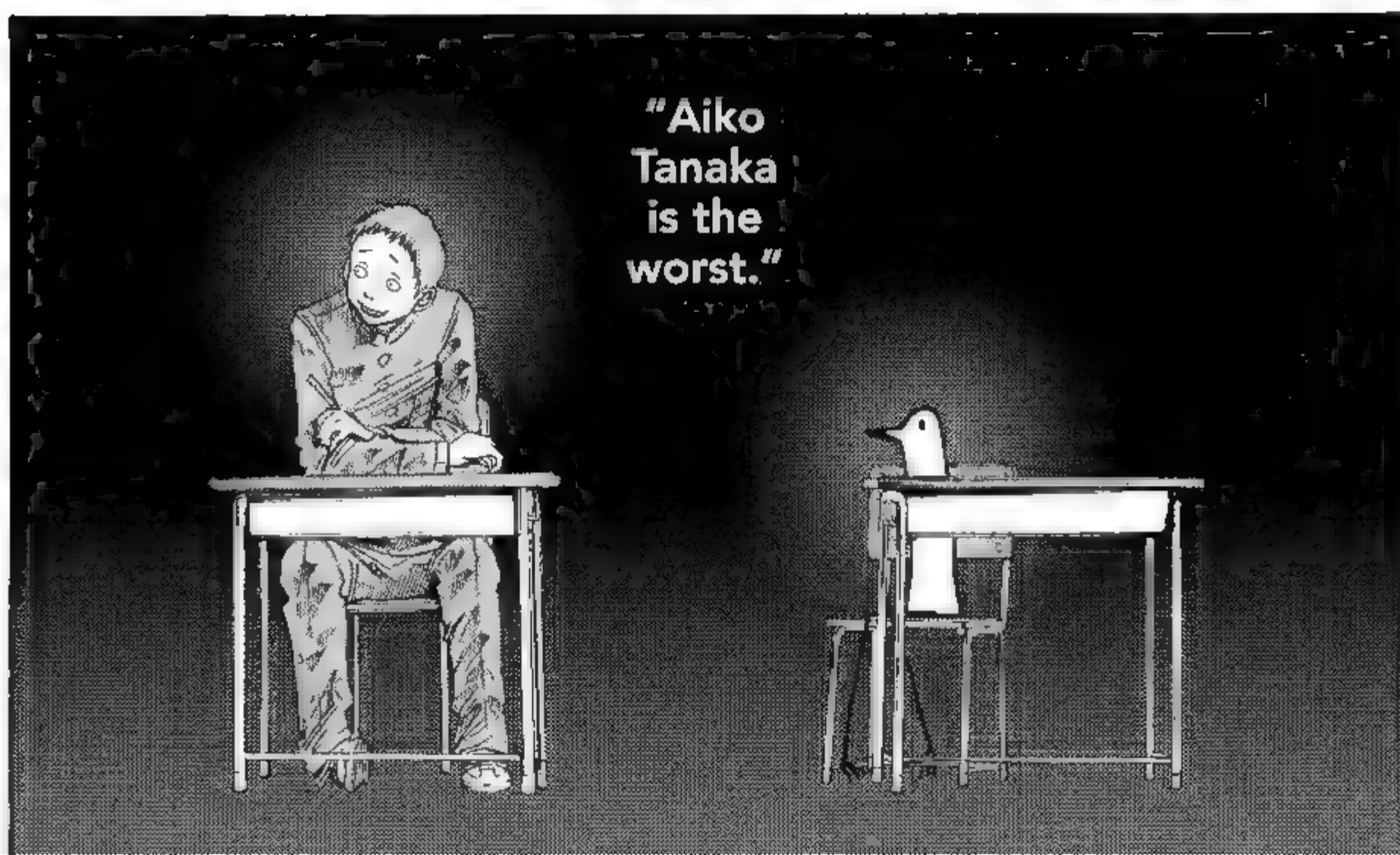
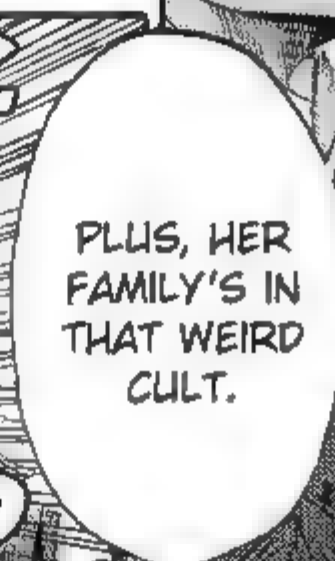
I
HEAR
HE HAS
A HUGE
DICK.

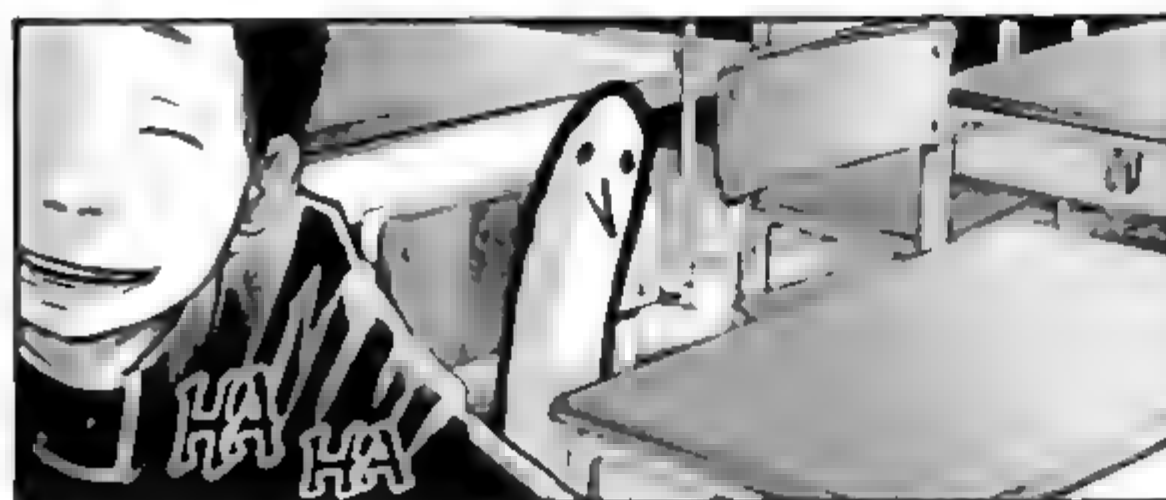


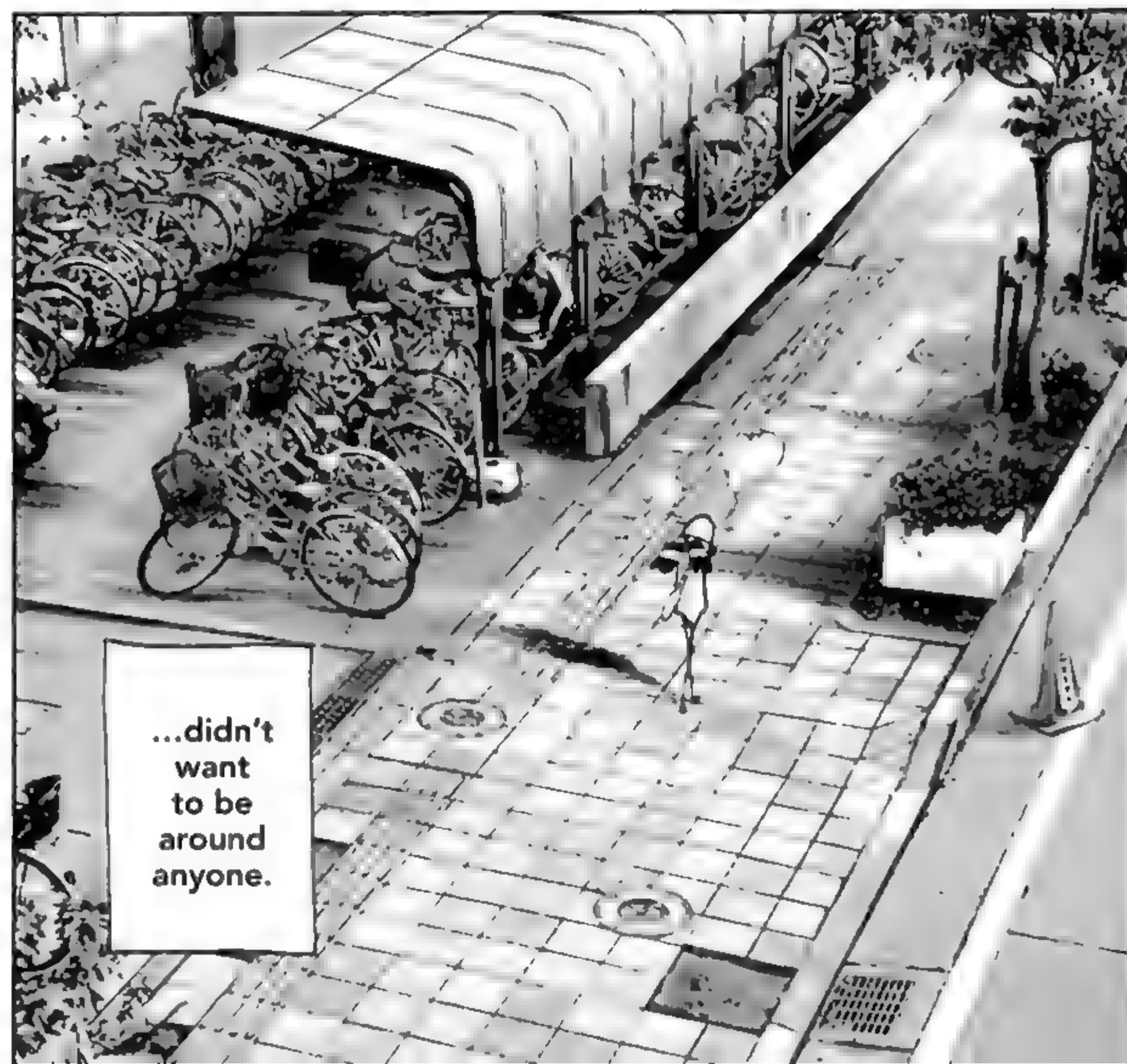
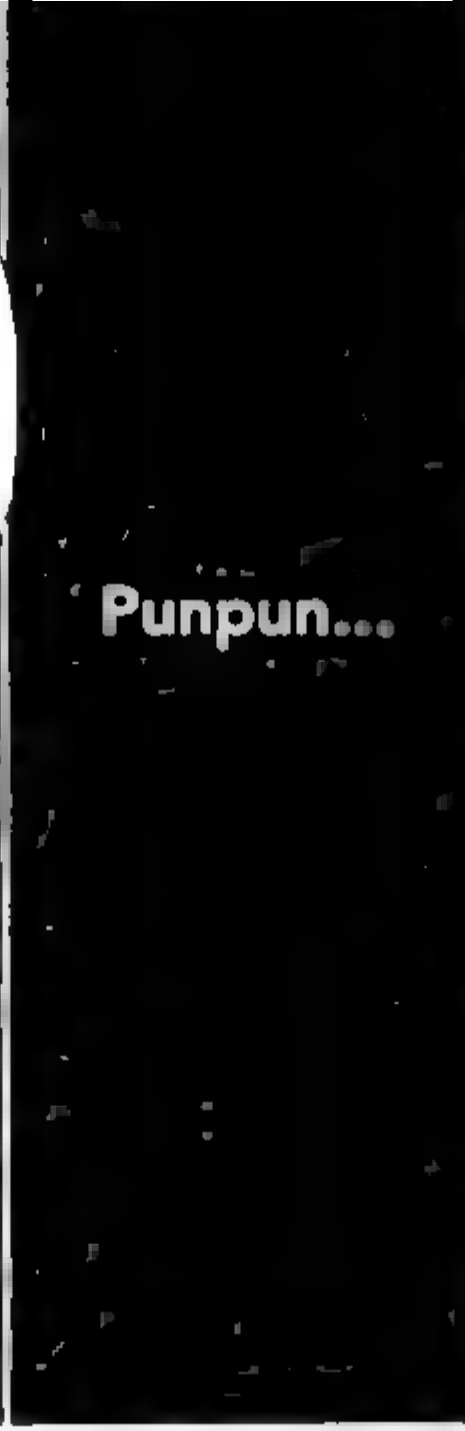














"Aiko is not the worst."

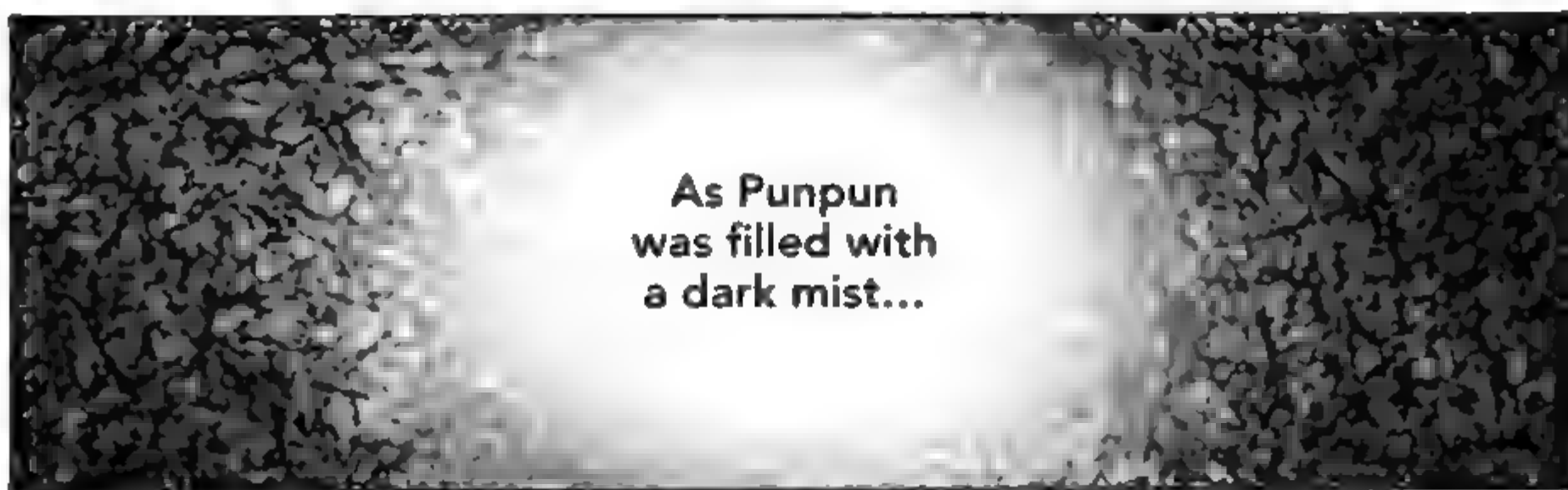
...Punpun said to himself.



Punpun was
sure that
Yaguchi was
leading Aiko
astray.



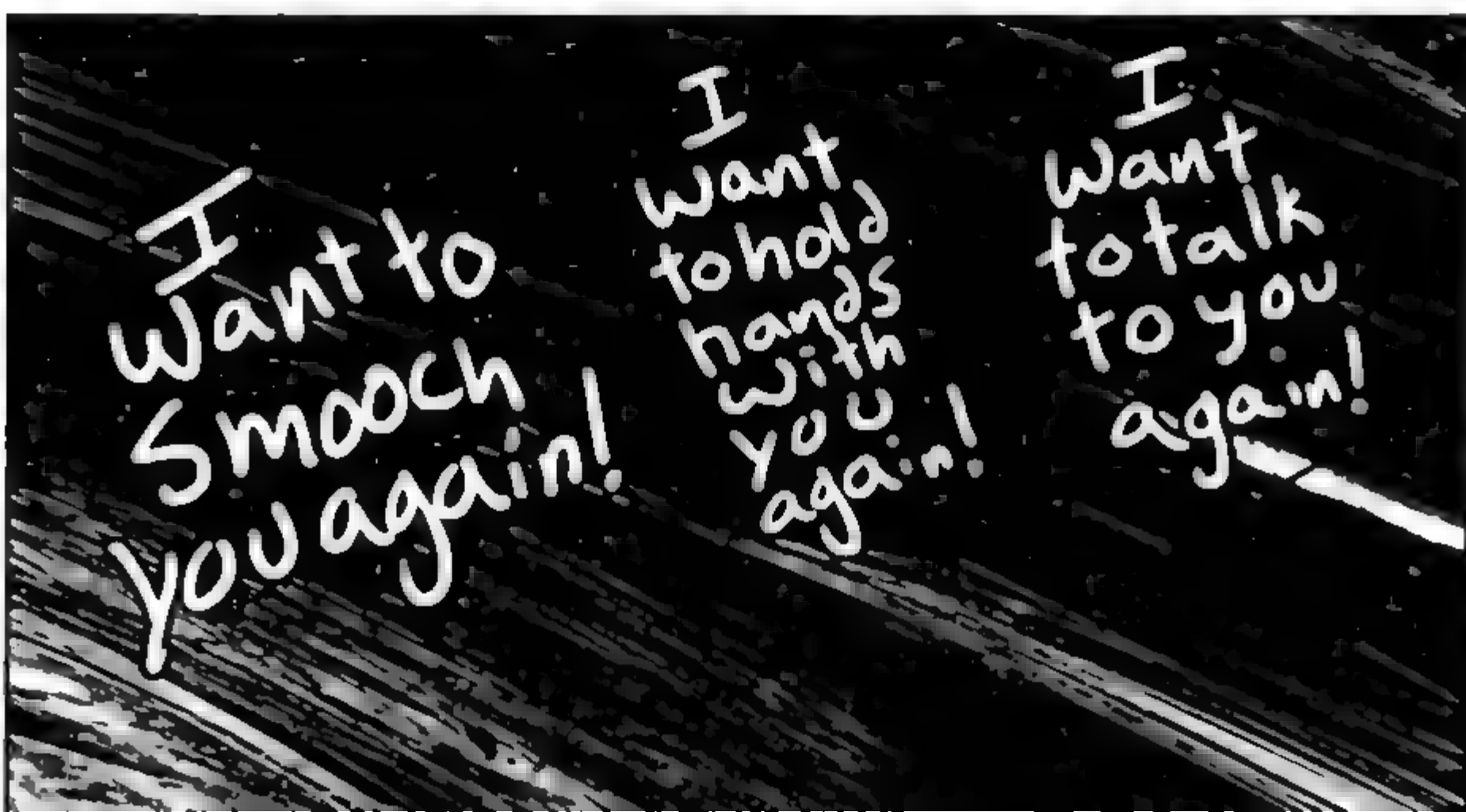
As Punpun
was filled with
a dark mist...

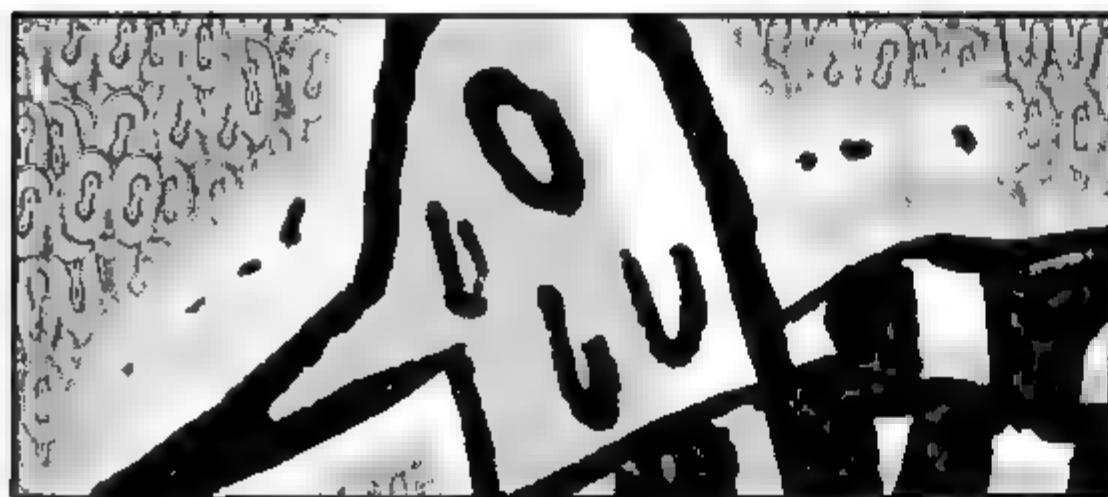
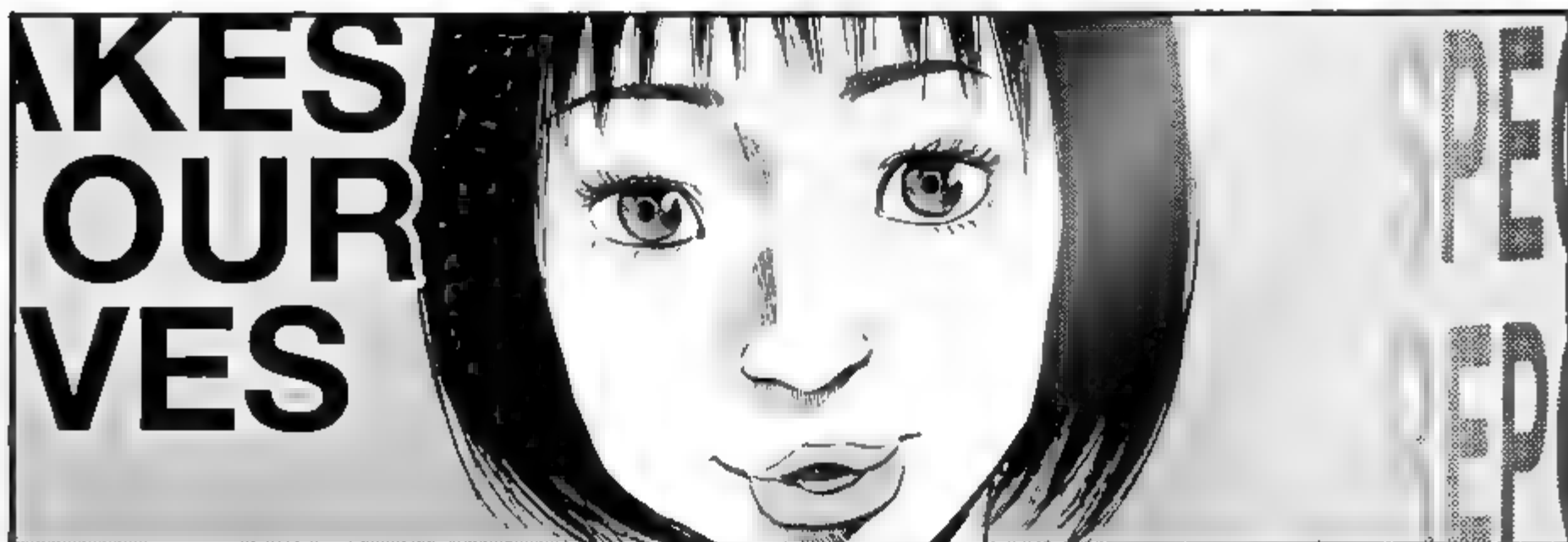


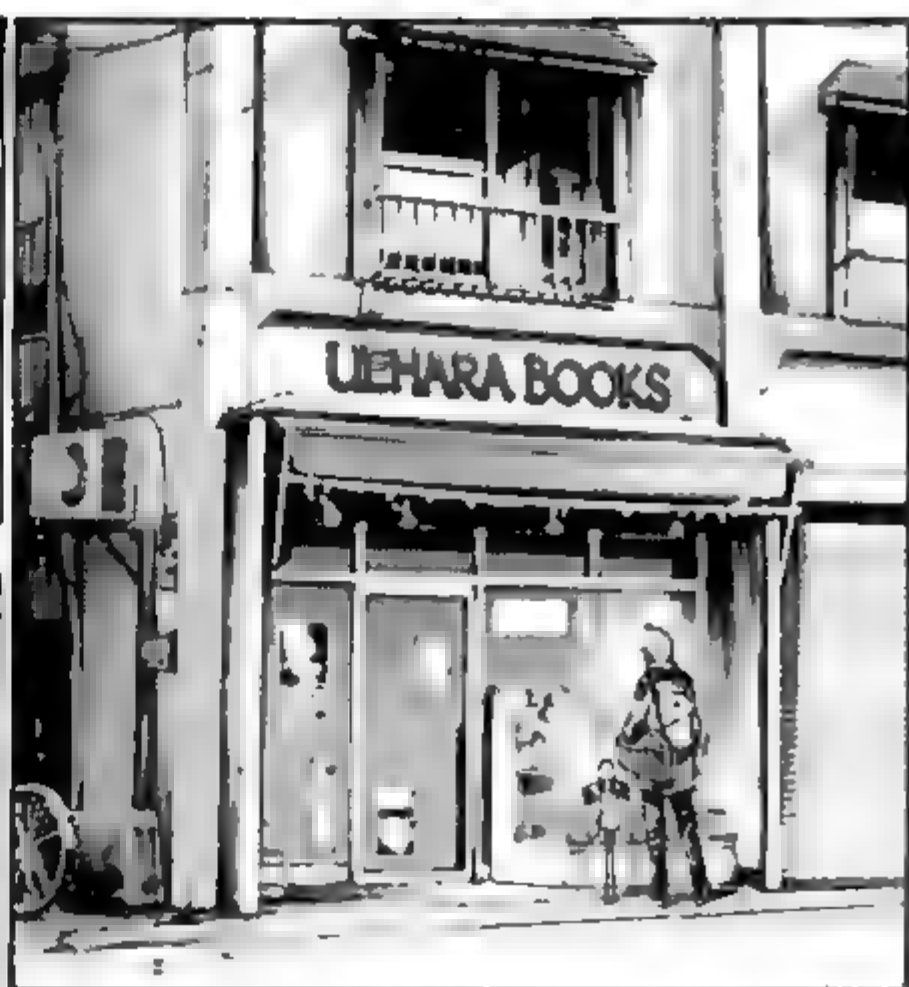
...seemed
to fade
and
recede...

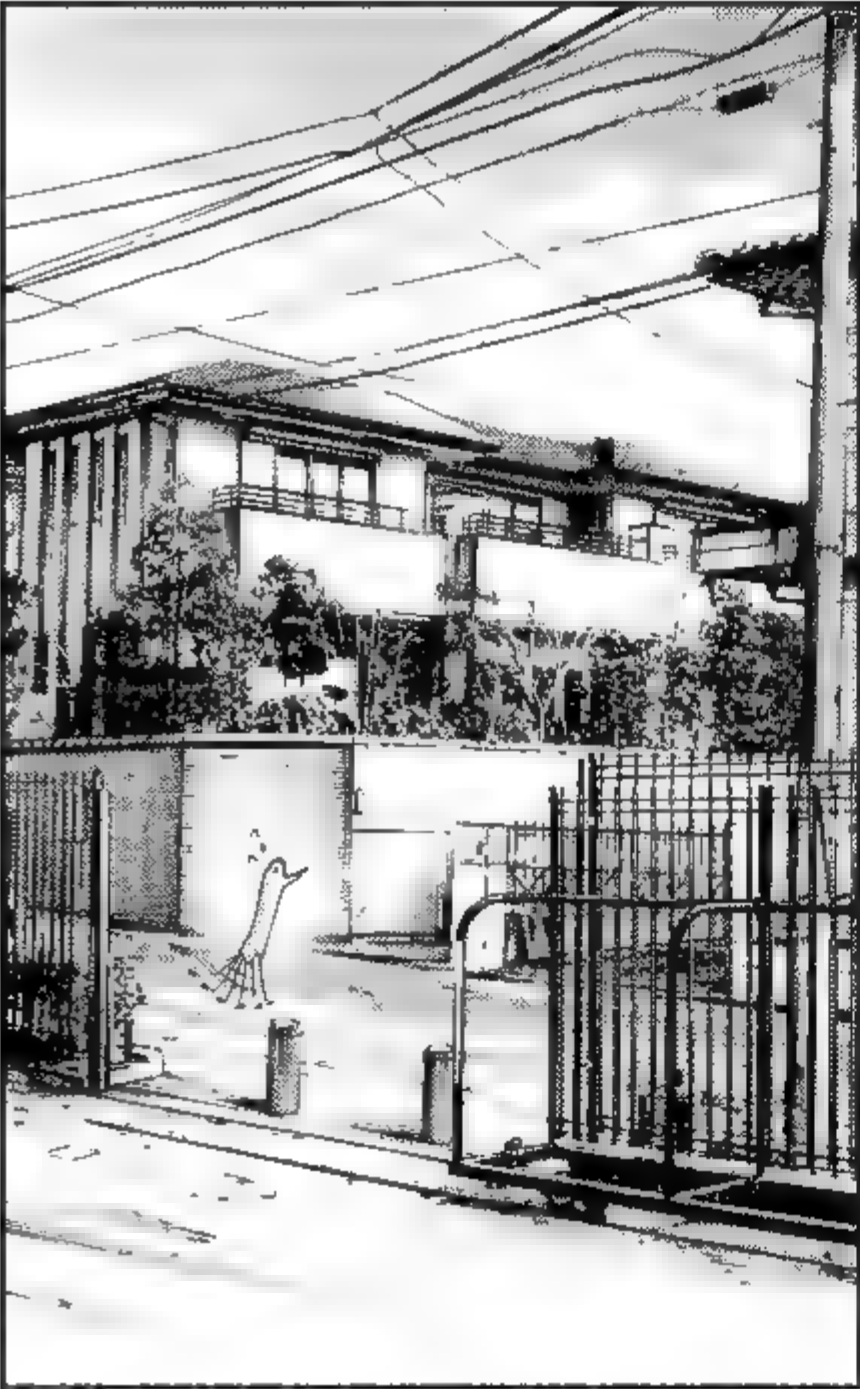
...his
memories
of Aiko
from two
years
ago...



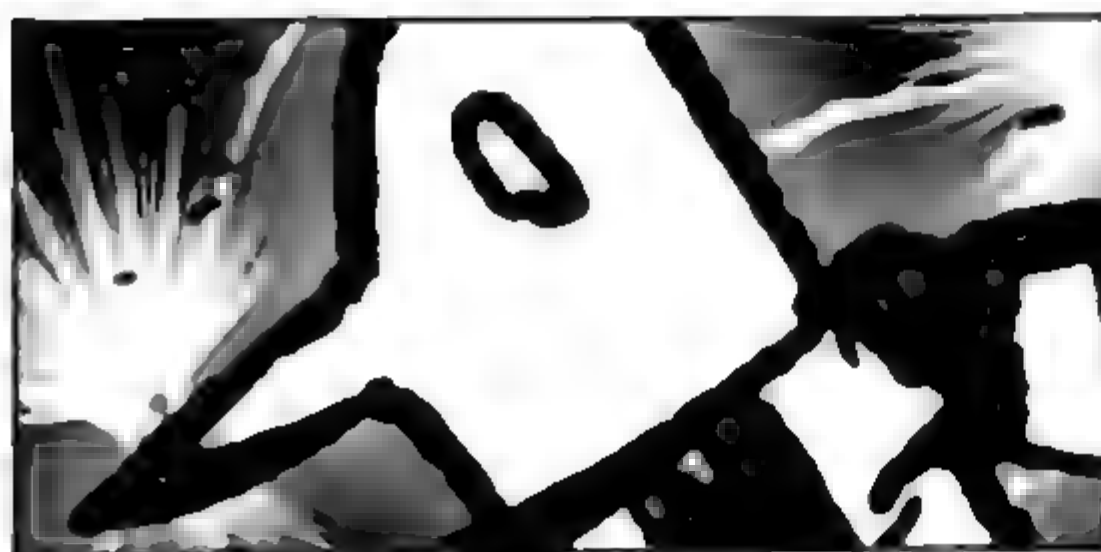
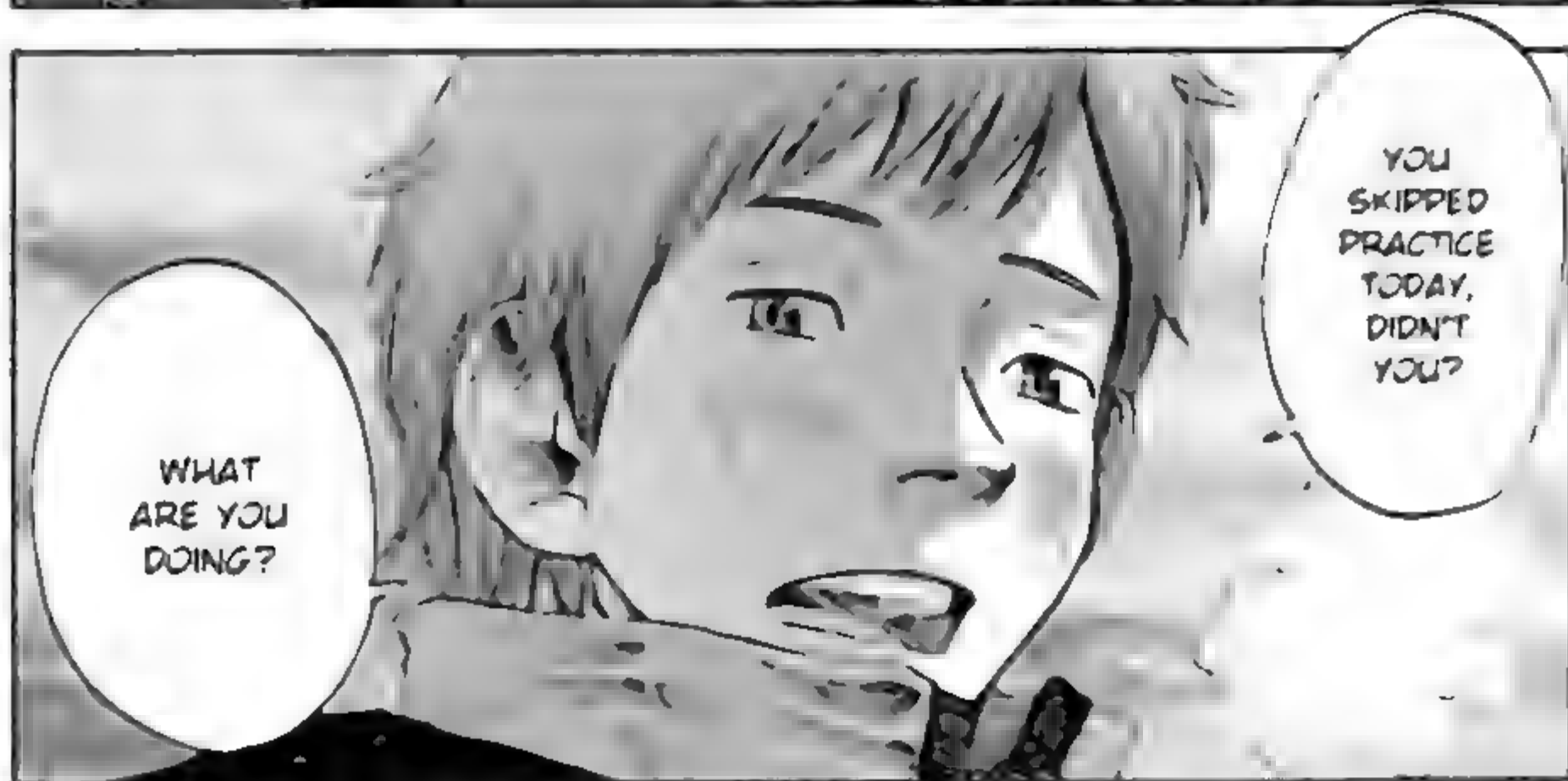














WE ALL
HAVE OFF
DAYS...



I
GET
IT.



WELL...



...
ONODERA!

SERIOUSLY,
DUDE, YOU
AREN'T VERY
MEMORABLE.

UHM,
SORRY...

...YOUR
NAME'S
NOT OZAWA,
NOT ODA-
JIMA...



LET'S
WALK
TOGETHER.

IF
YOU NEED
TO BUY A
MAGAZINE, I
CAN WAIT OUT
HERE.



YOU ON
YOUR WAY
HOME,
ONODERA?

I'VE GOT
A THING TO
DO OVER
THAT WAY.

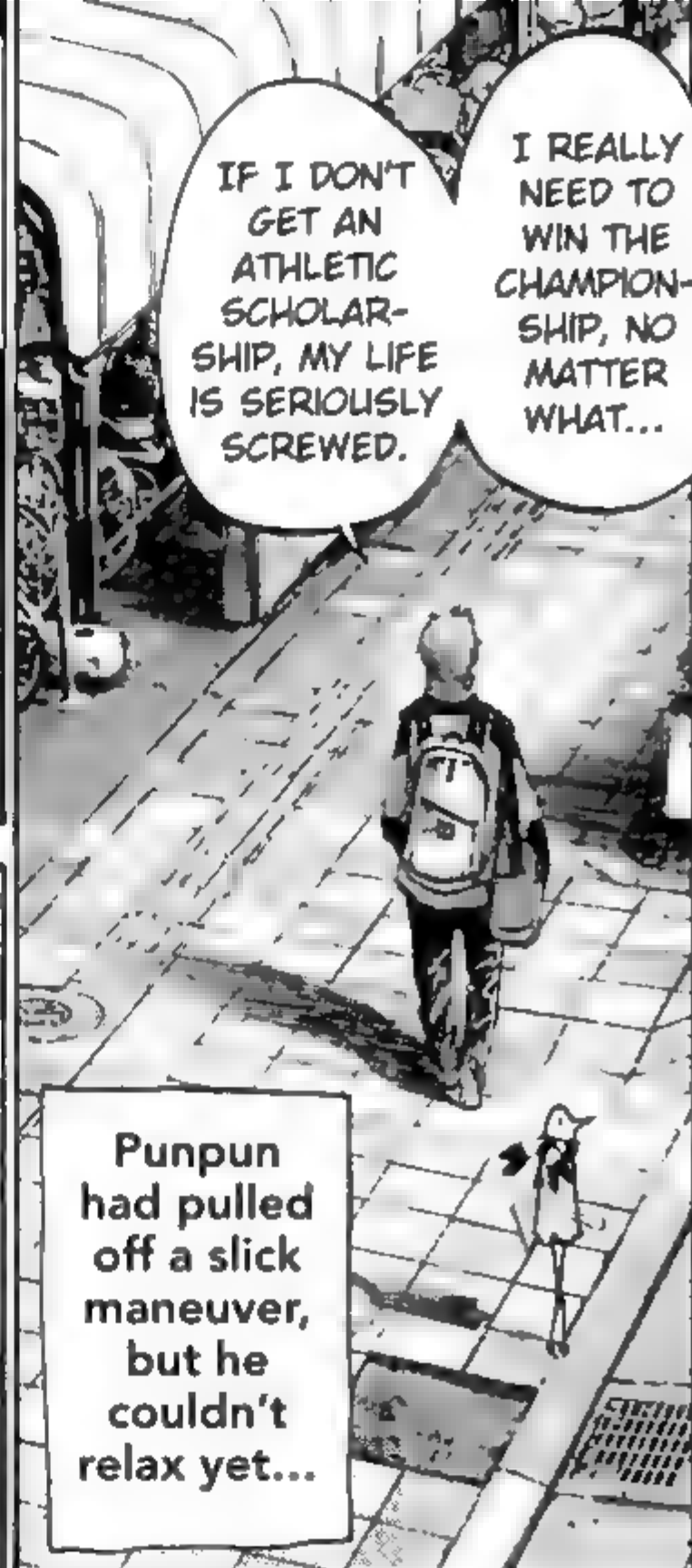


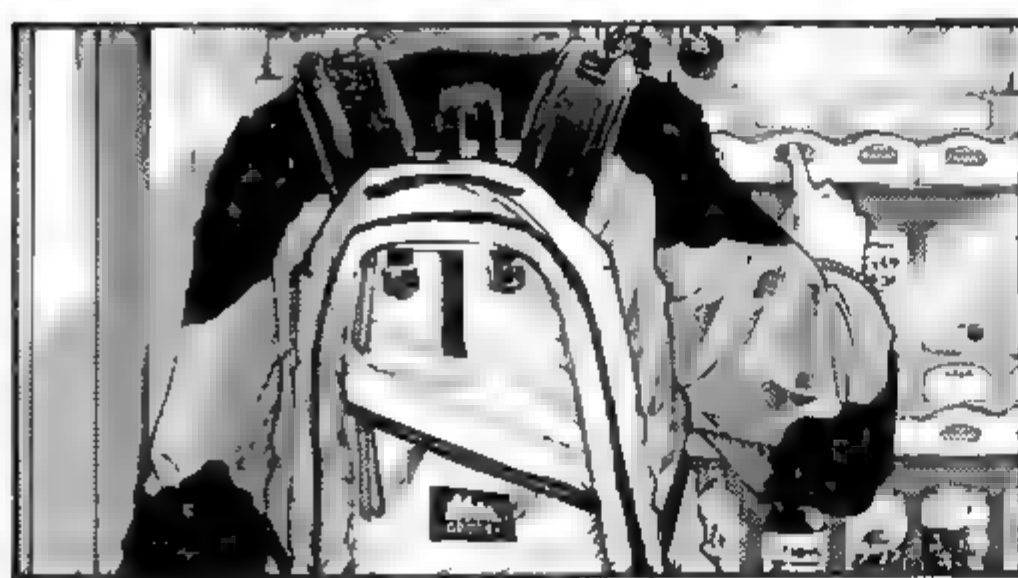
NO
RUSH.

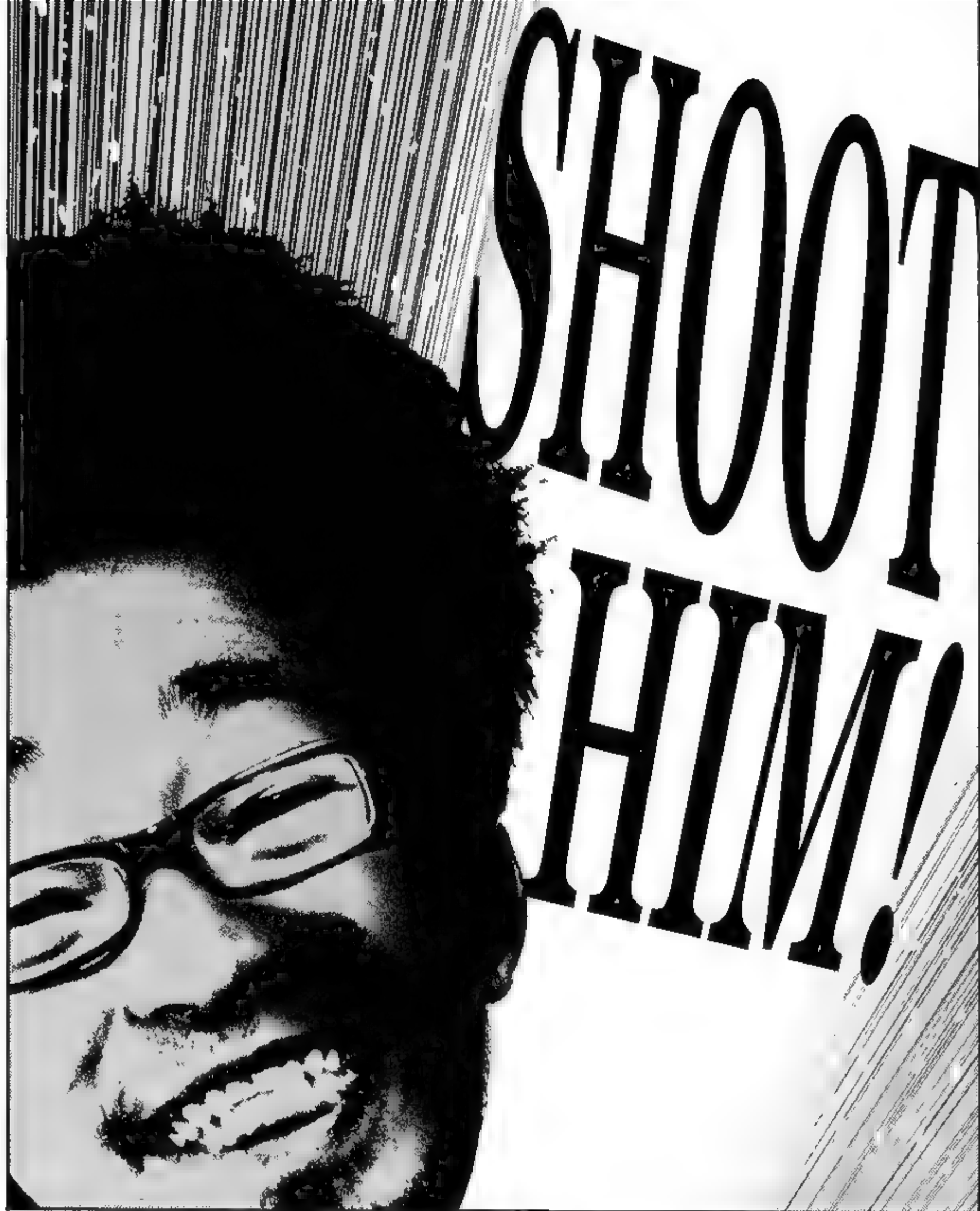
I SUCK
AT STUDYING.
BADMINTON HAS
BEEN MY THING
SINCE I WAS
IN ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL...

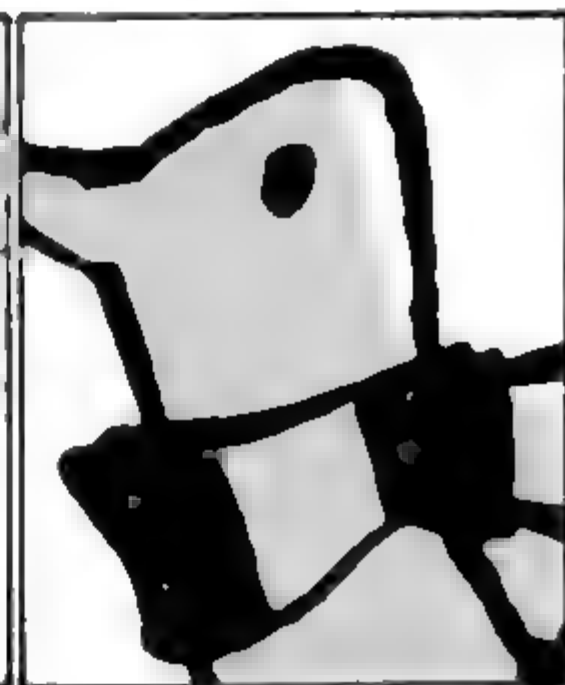


HEY, YOU
MUST BE
SMART...
...GETTING
SOMETHING
LIKE THAT...

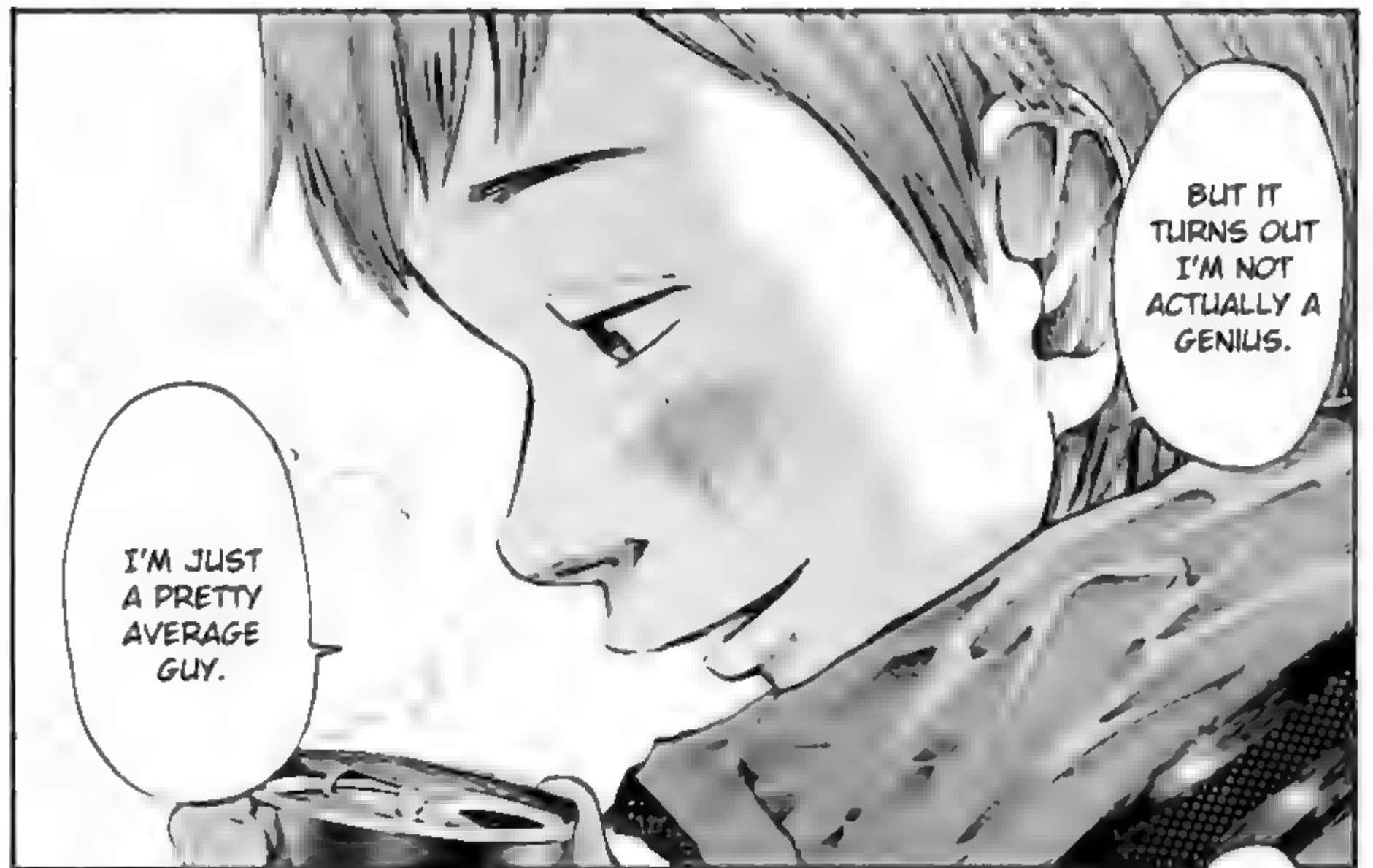














I...



DO
YOU LIKE
ANYONE,
ONODERA?



...
RECENTLY
GOT MY
FIRST
GIRLFRIEND.

ACTU-
ALLY,
I...



MAYBE
THAT'S WHY
I CAN'T BEAT
KOMATSU.

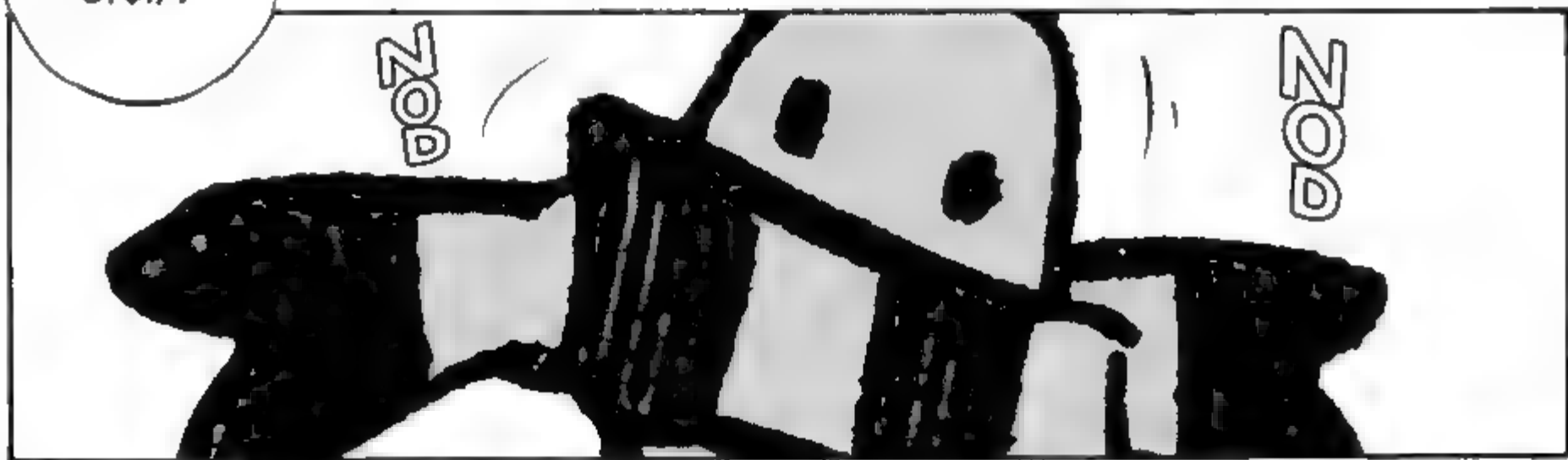
SHE'S
ALL I CAN
THINK
ABOUT

I DON'T
KNOW HOW
TO TALK TO
HER. JUST
HOLDING HER
HAND MAKES
ME SUPER
NERVOUS!



IT GOT
DEPRESSING
AGAIN!

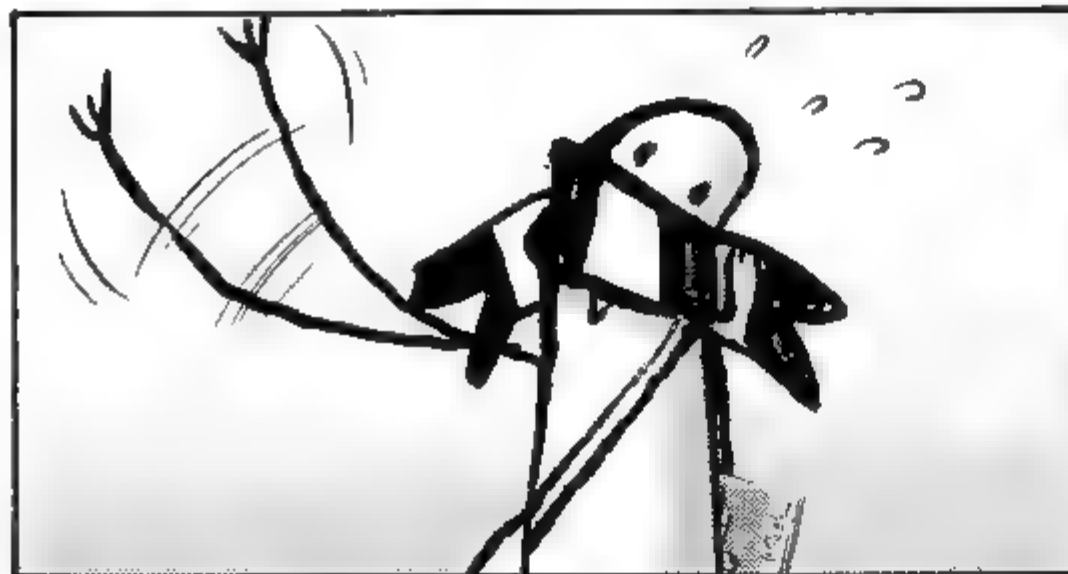
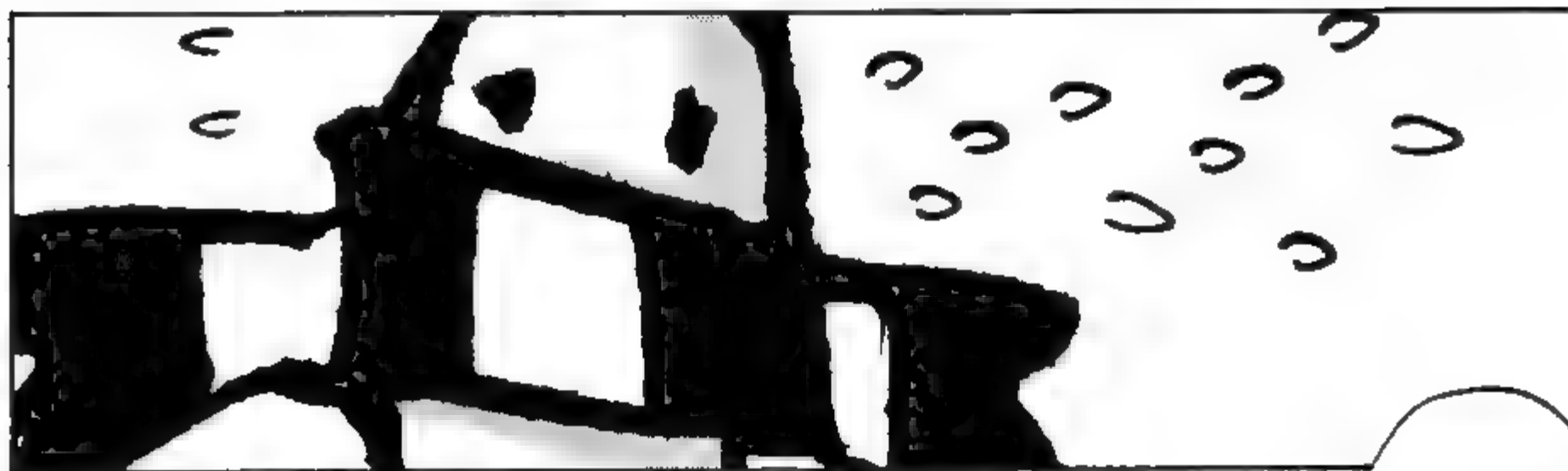
GYAACK!
SORRY!





...BECAUSE
MAKING
HER HAPPY
IS WHAT
MAKES ME
HAPPY?


DO YOU
THINK I'M
PATHETIC...



SORRY,
NEVER
MIND.
YOU'RE
SUCH A
GOOD
LISTENER!

LET'S
HANG
OUT
AGAIN!

Yaguchi's
smile
reminded
Punpun of
Harumi, a
friend from
long ago.



The
girlfriend
that
Yaguchi
had
referred
to was
probably
Aiko.



Even so,
Punpun
loved
Aiko.



And
Punpun...



...liked
Yaguchi
just a
little bit
too.

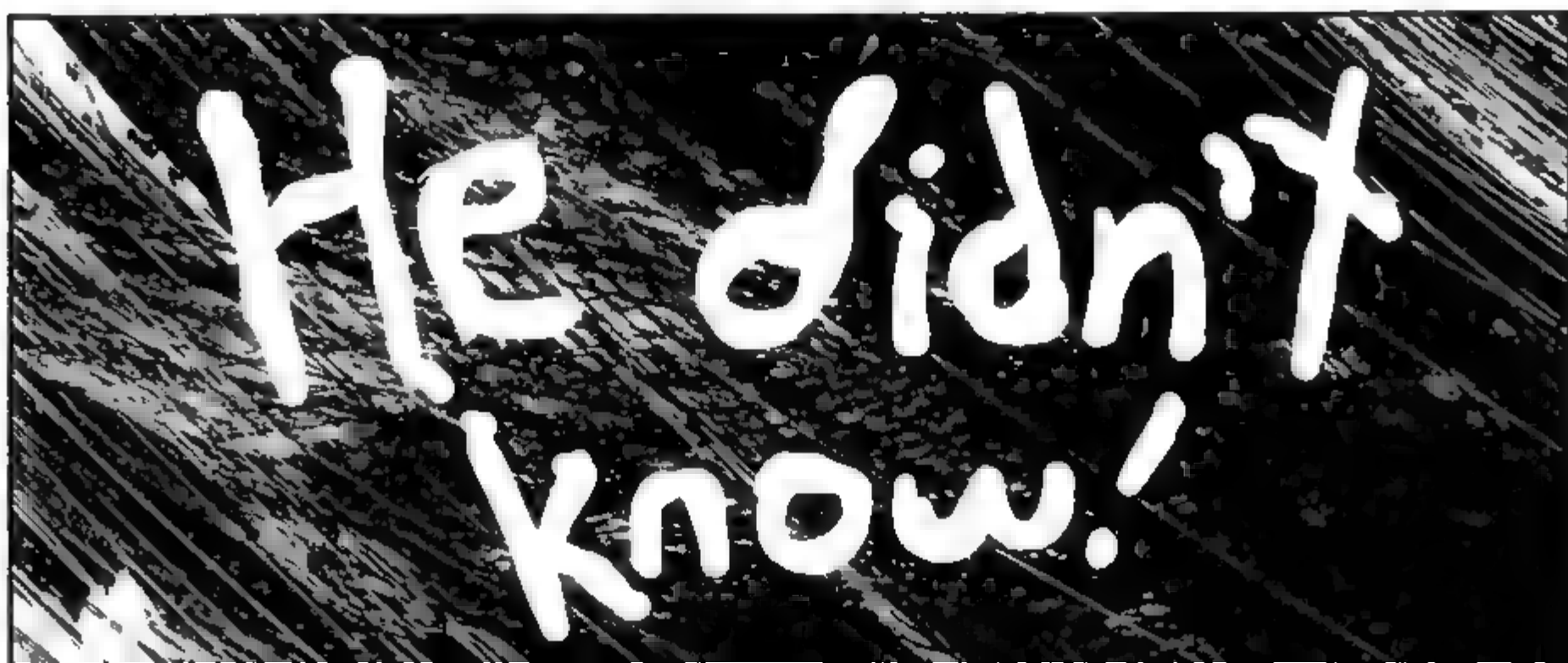


...but Punpun
wondered who
would welcome
his love.

...wanted
Yaguchi to find
happiness, no
matter how
modest...

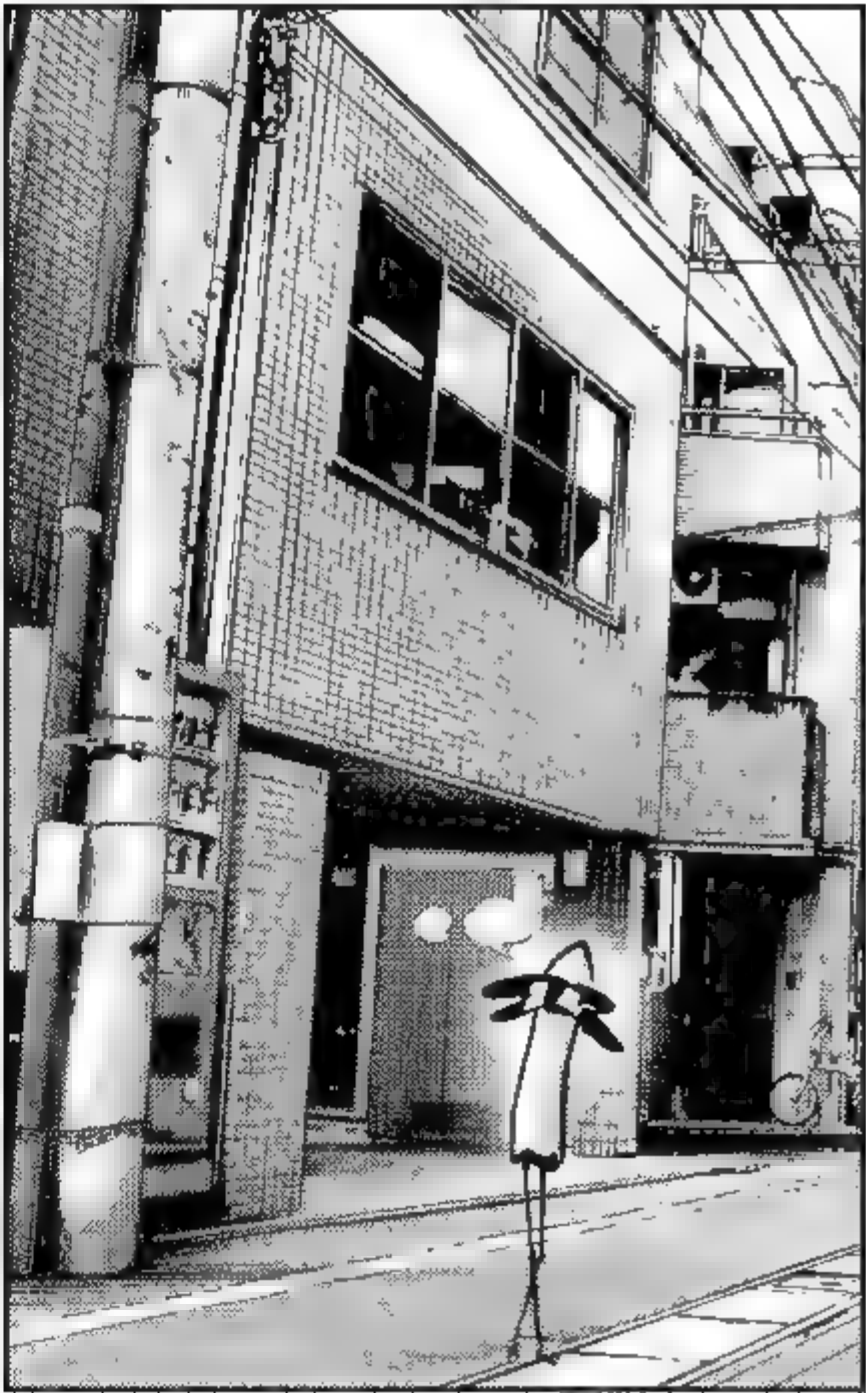


He
didn't
know
what
to do
anymore!



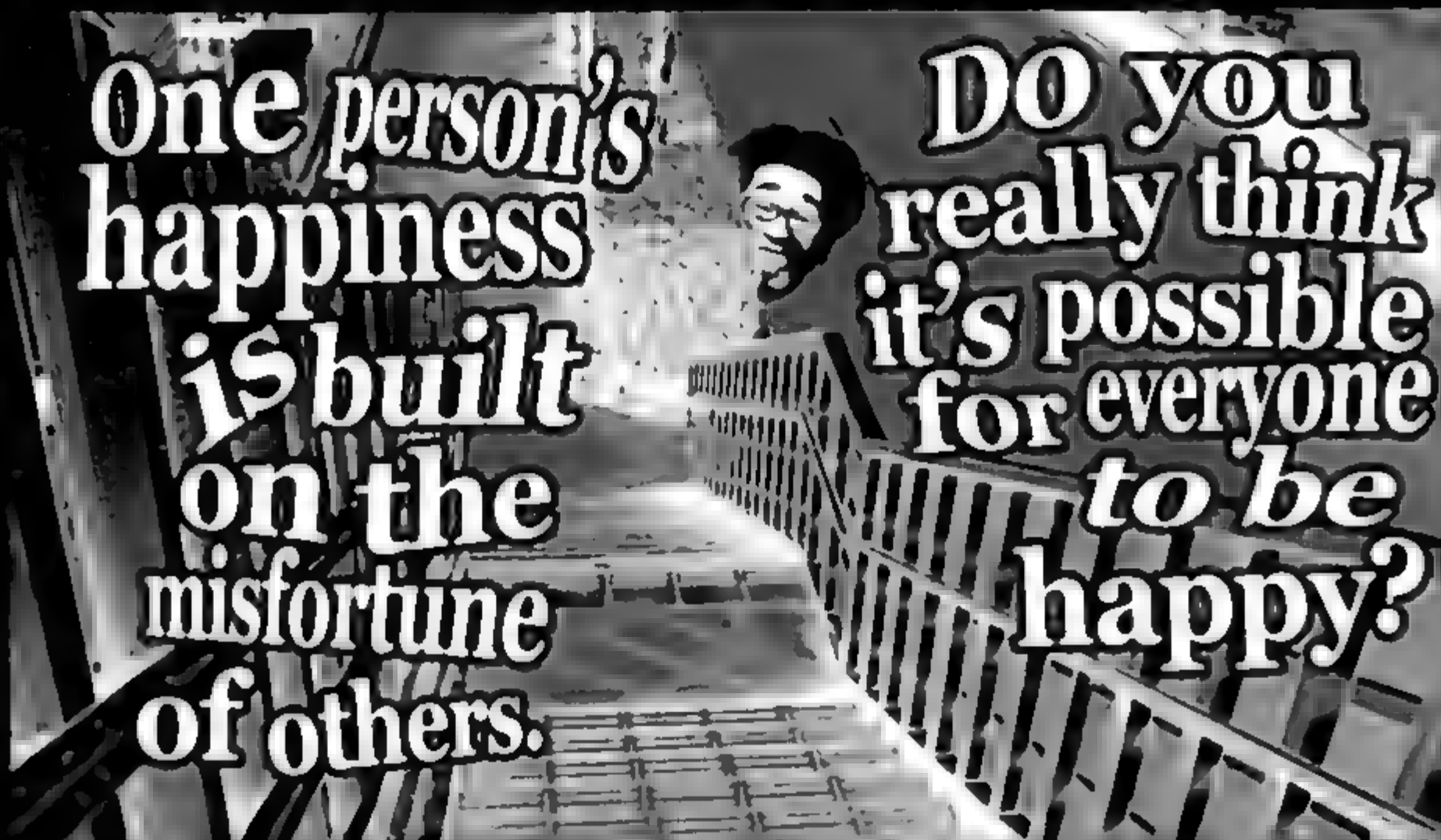






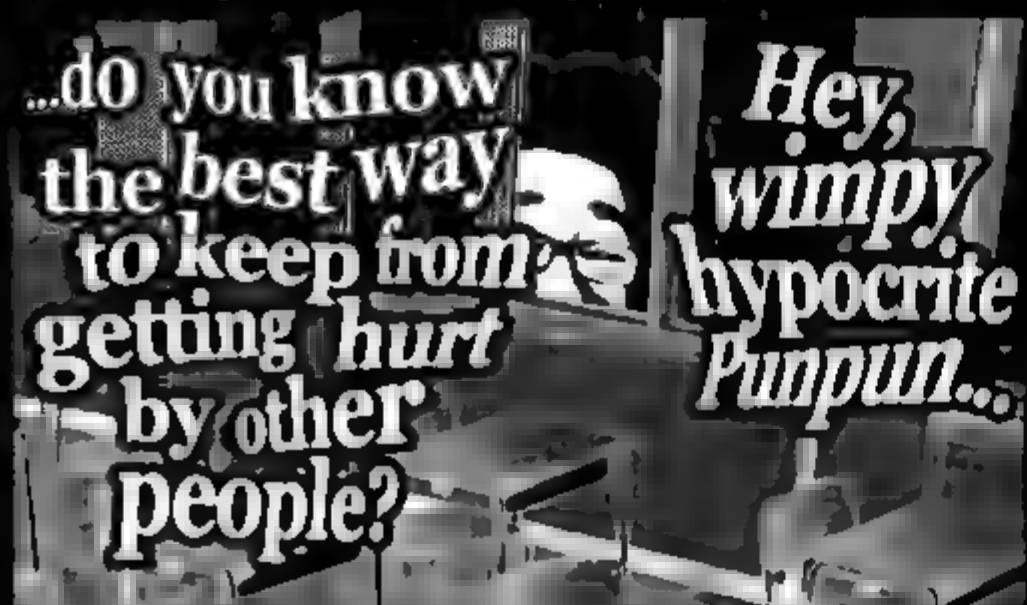


Punpun,
you're
a good
kid.
It
makes
me want
to puke.



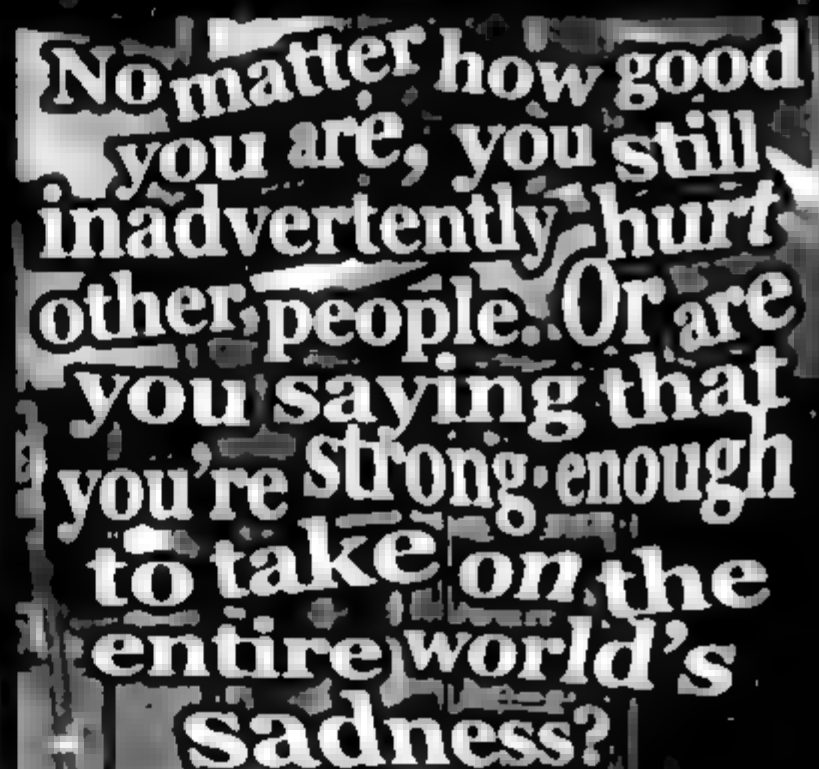
One person's
happiness
is built
on the
misfortune
of others.

DO you
really think
it's possible
for everyone
to be
happy?



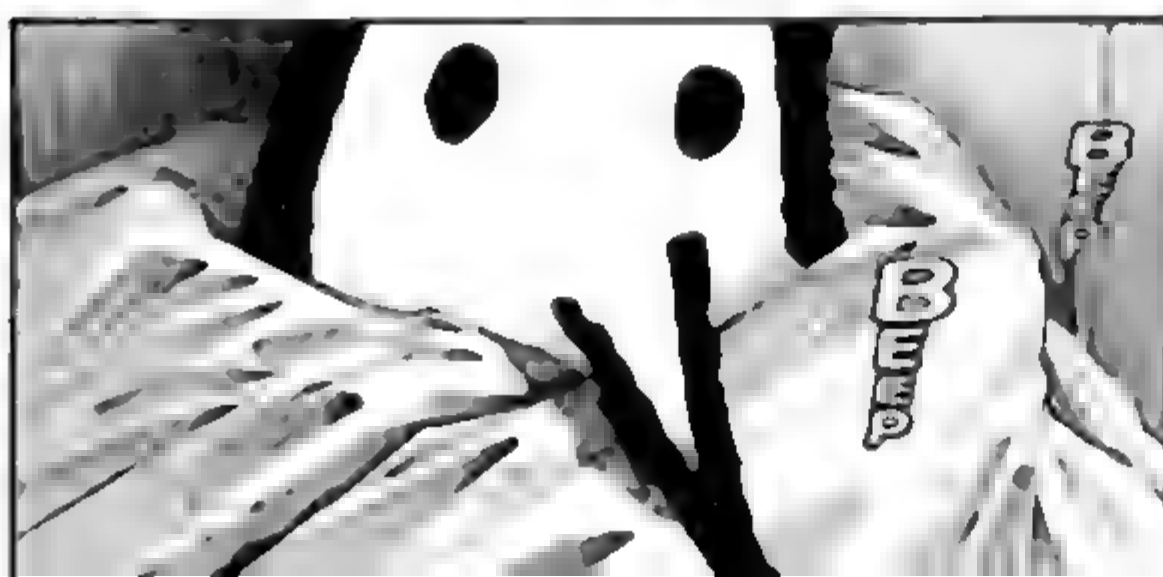
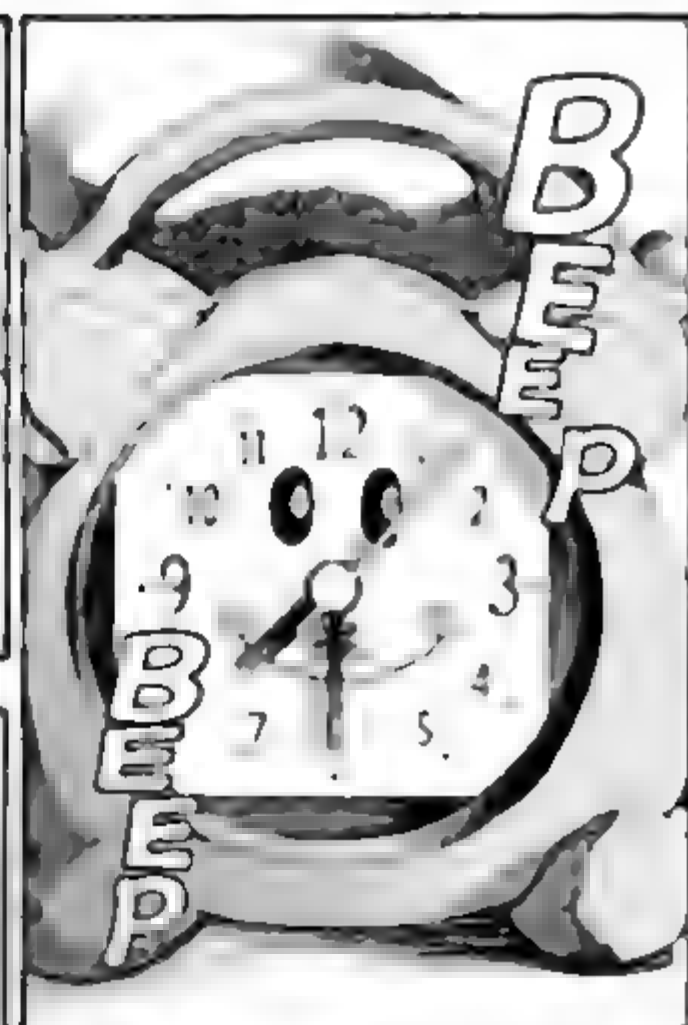
...do you know
the best way
to keep from
getting hurt
by other
people?

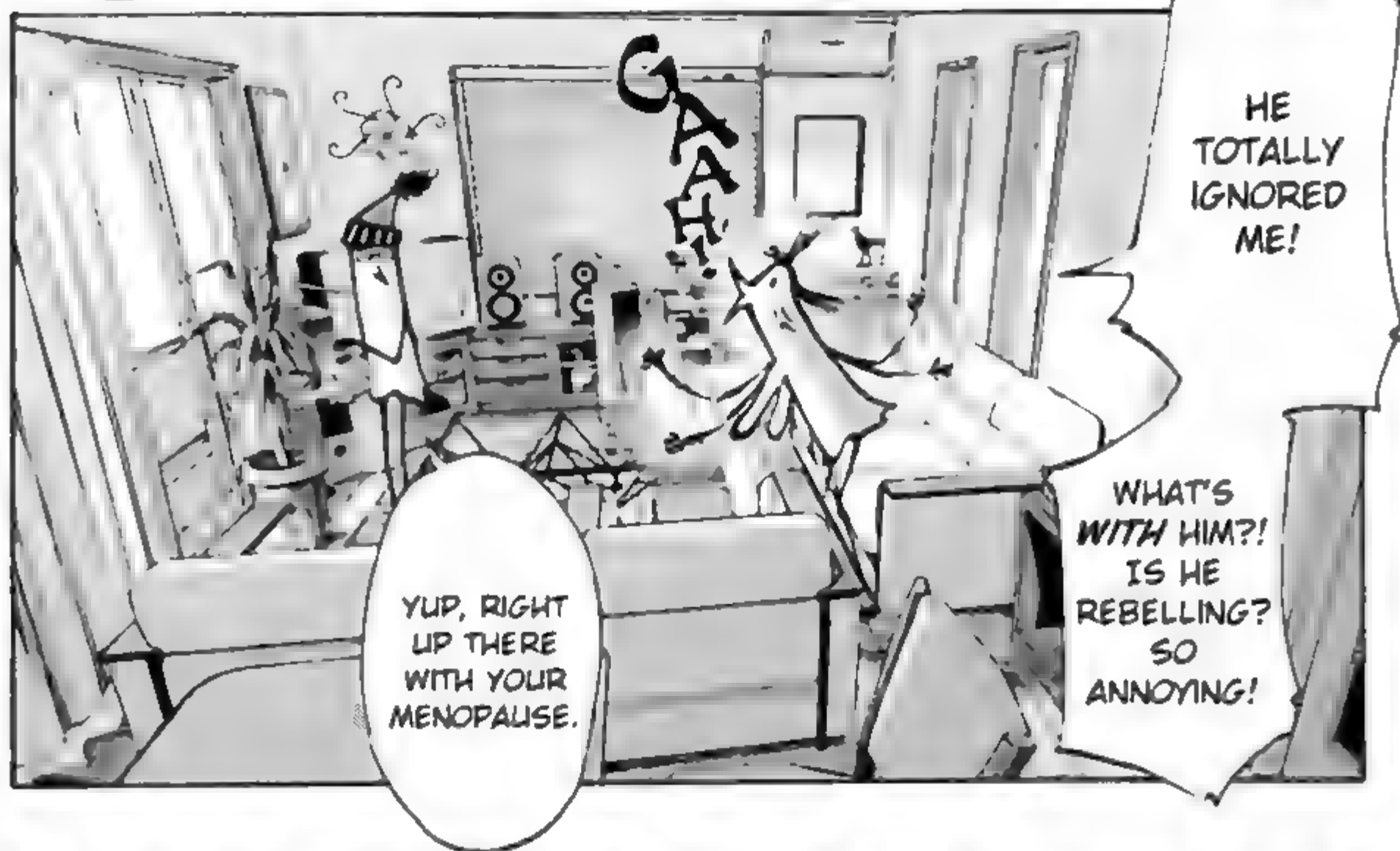
Hey,
wimpy
hypocrite
Punpun...



No matter how good
you are, you still
inadvertently hurt
other people. Or are
you saying that
you're strong enough
to take on the
entire world's
sadness?

Kill
them
first.





CS
W

CS
H

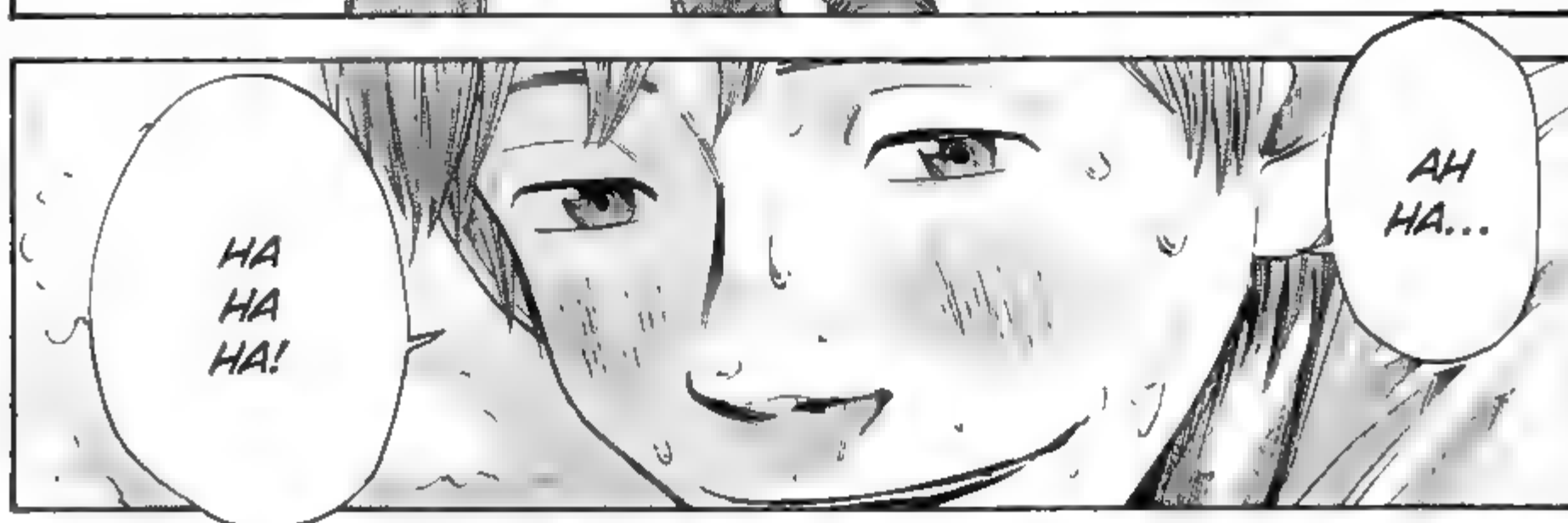


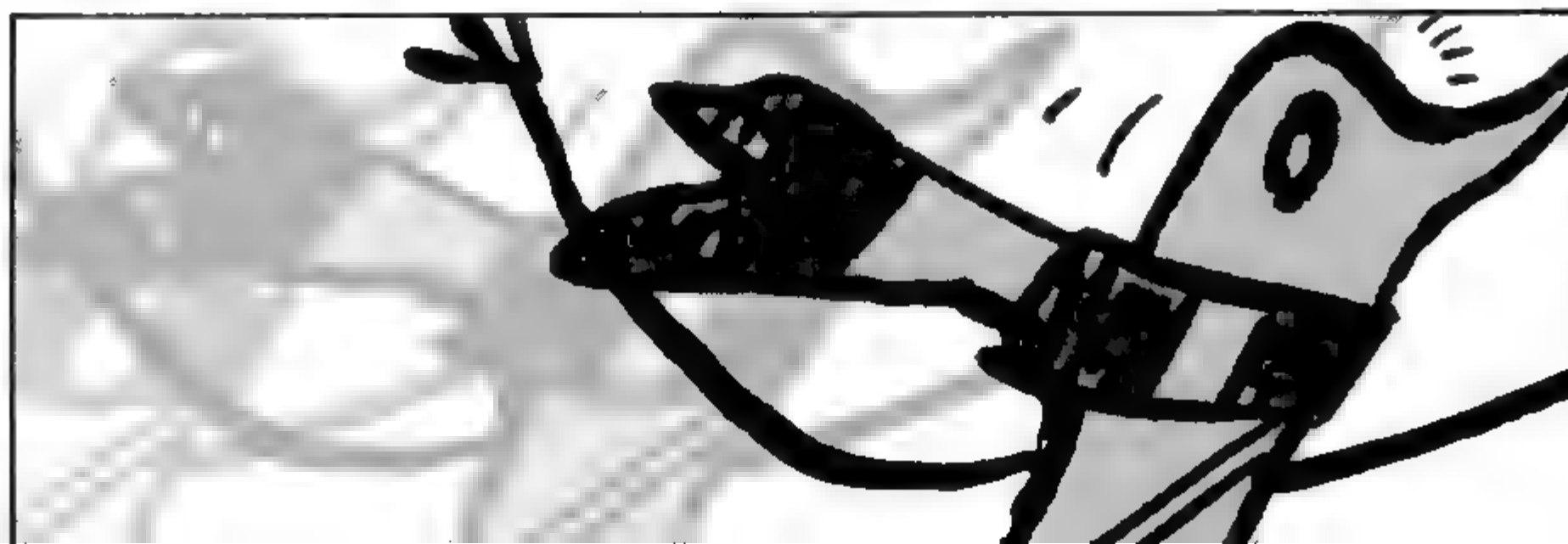


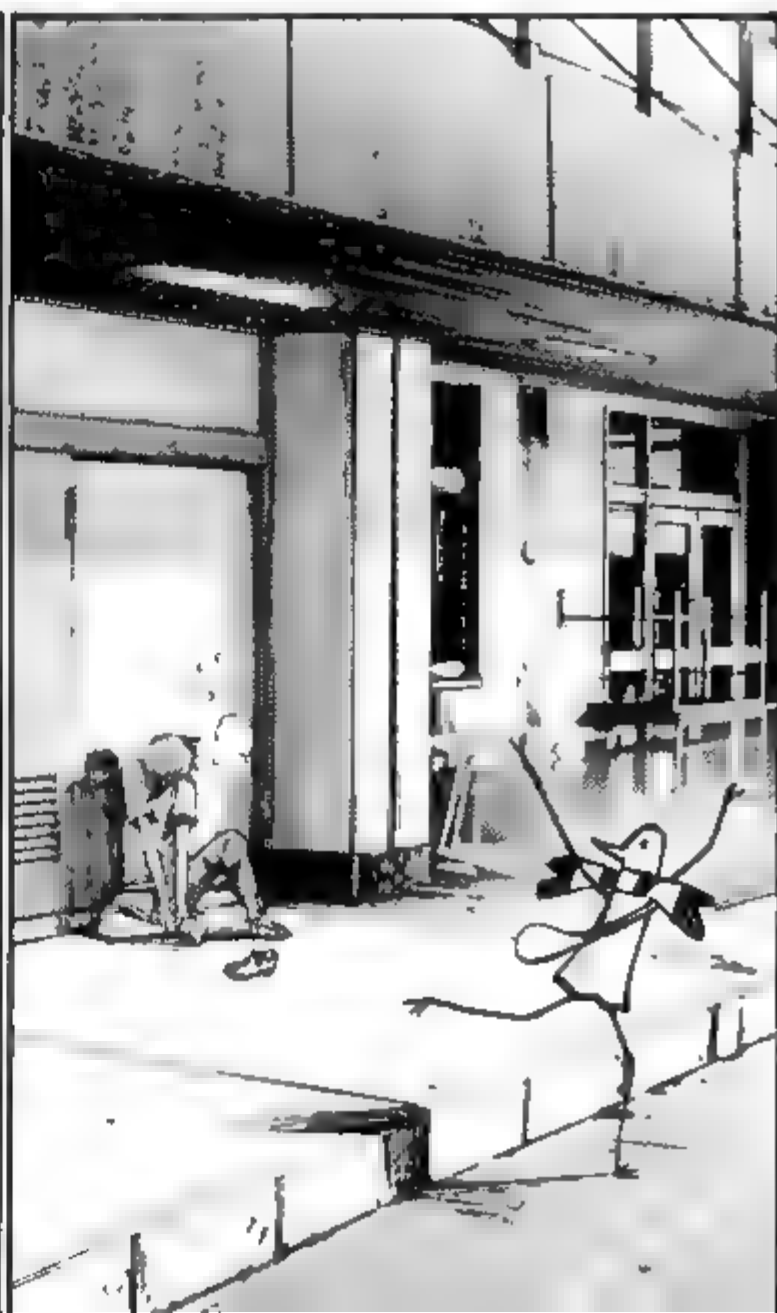
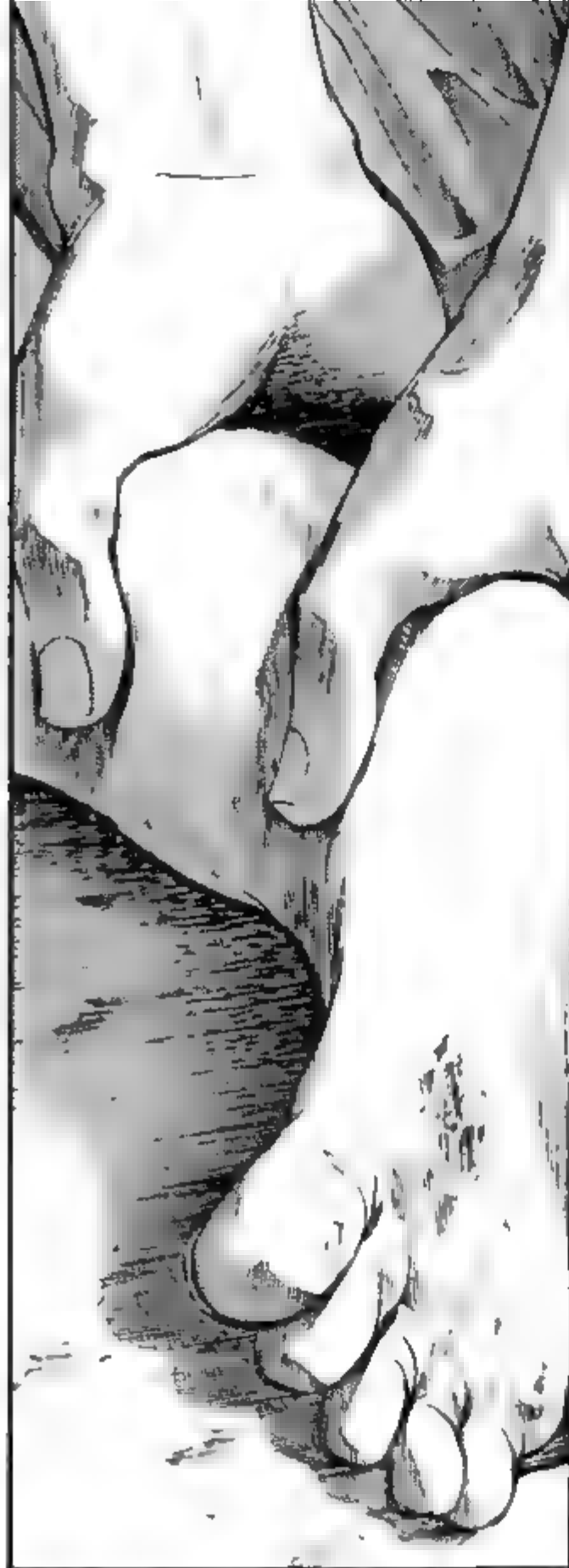
IT'S TOO
EARLY
FOR THIS!
PUSSY,
PUSSY!

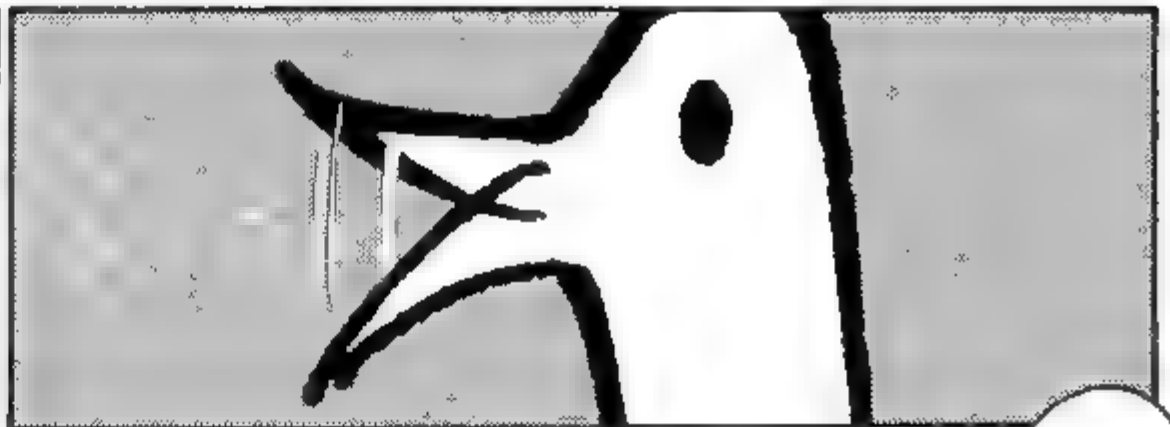
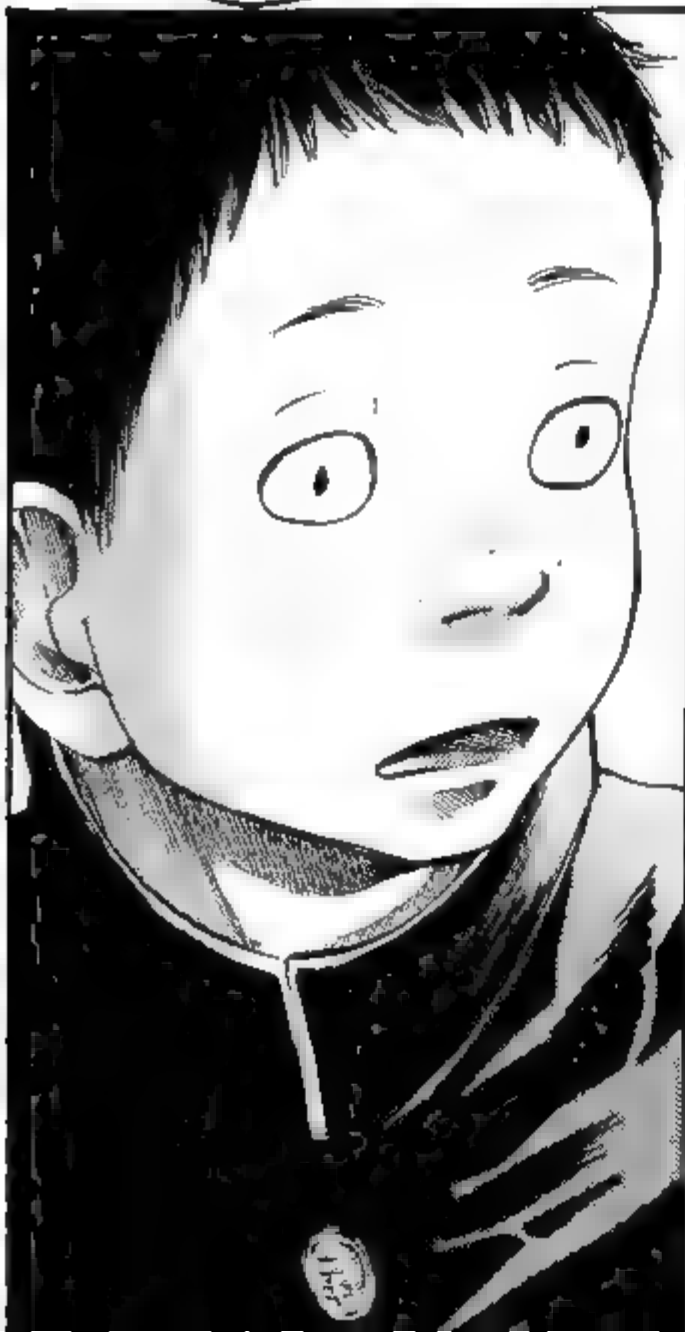
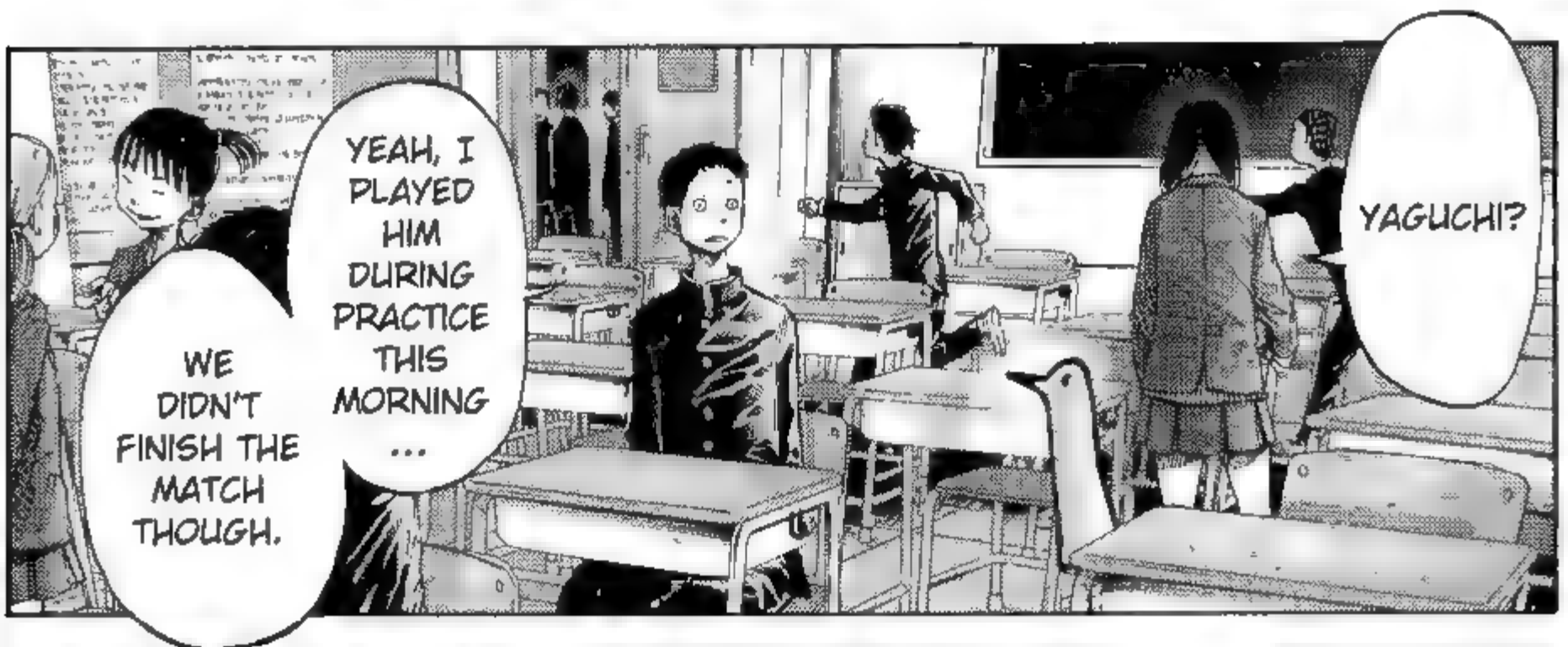
WE
FINALLY
GET IN THE
GYM, AND
ALL WE'RE
DOING IS
REFEREEING.













WHEN
YOU'RE ON
THE COURT,
WINNING OR
LOSING IS
THE ONLY
THING THAT
MATTERS.

...THIS
IS VERY
IMPORTANT
TO ME, SO
LET ME
TRY TO
EXPLAIN...

PUNPUN
...



THAT'S
MY
CODE.

...BUT IF
HE STEPS ON
THE COURT,
IF **ANYONE**
DOES, I WILL
DEMOLISH
THEM WITH
THE UTMOST
RESPECT.

I DON'T
KNOW
WHAT'S
GOING
ON WITH
YAGUCHI
...

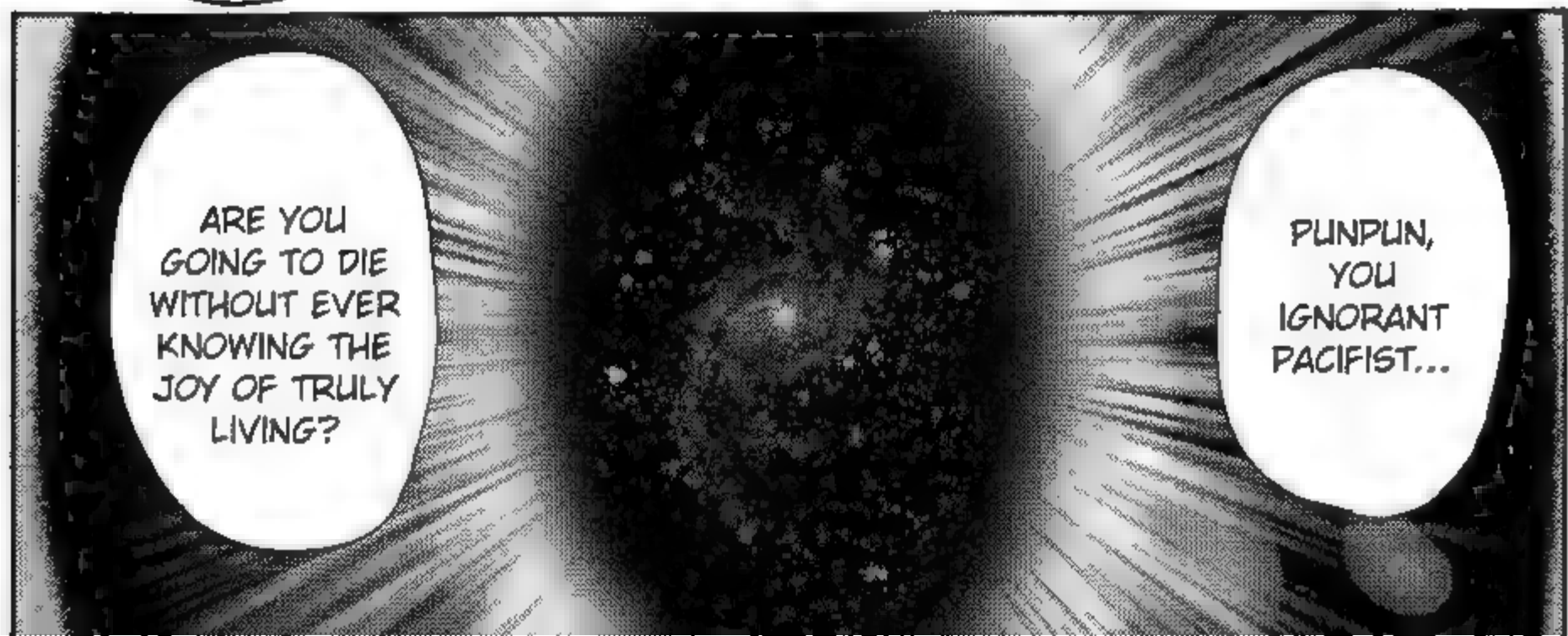
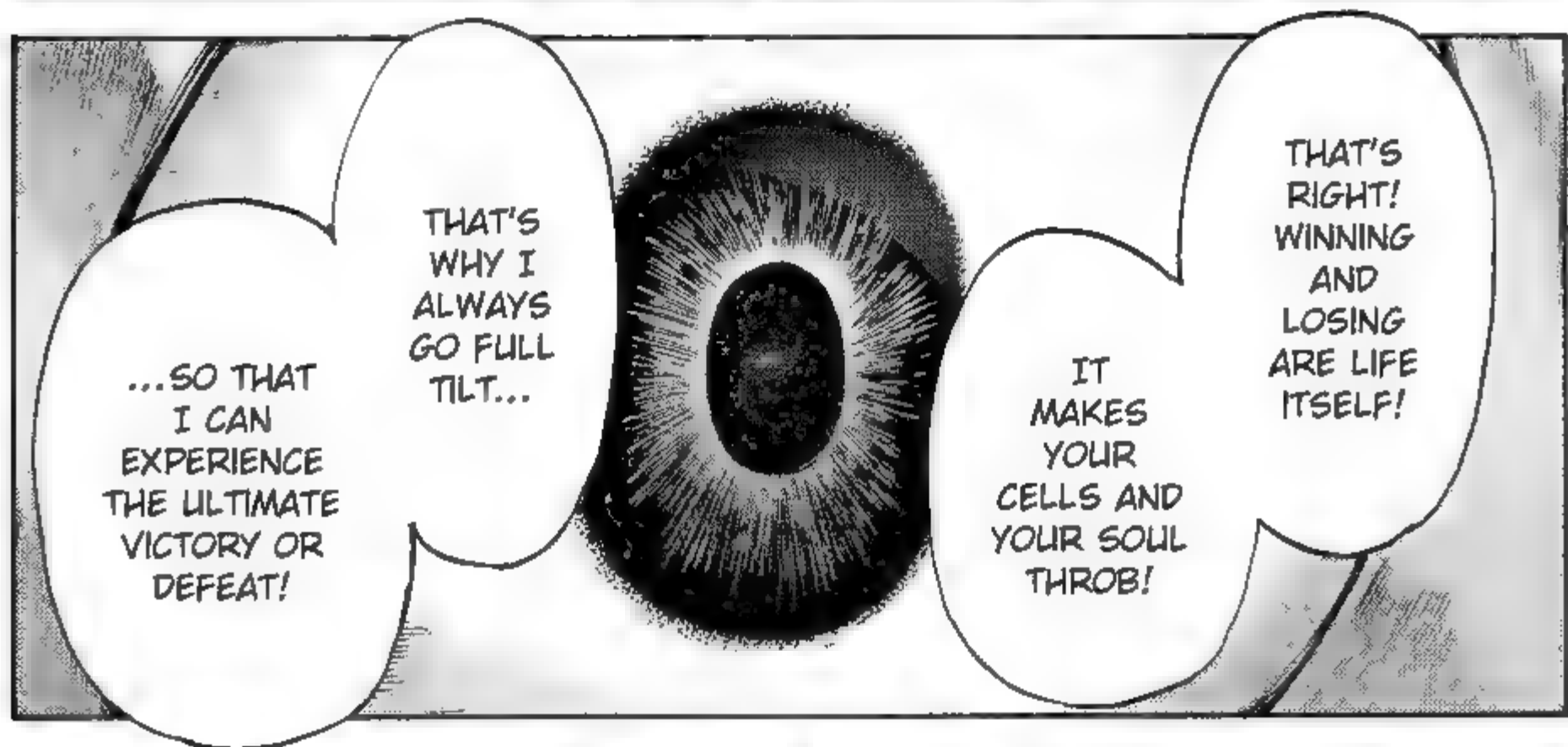
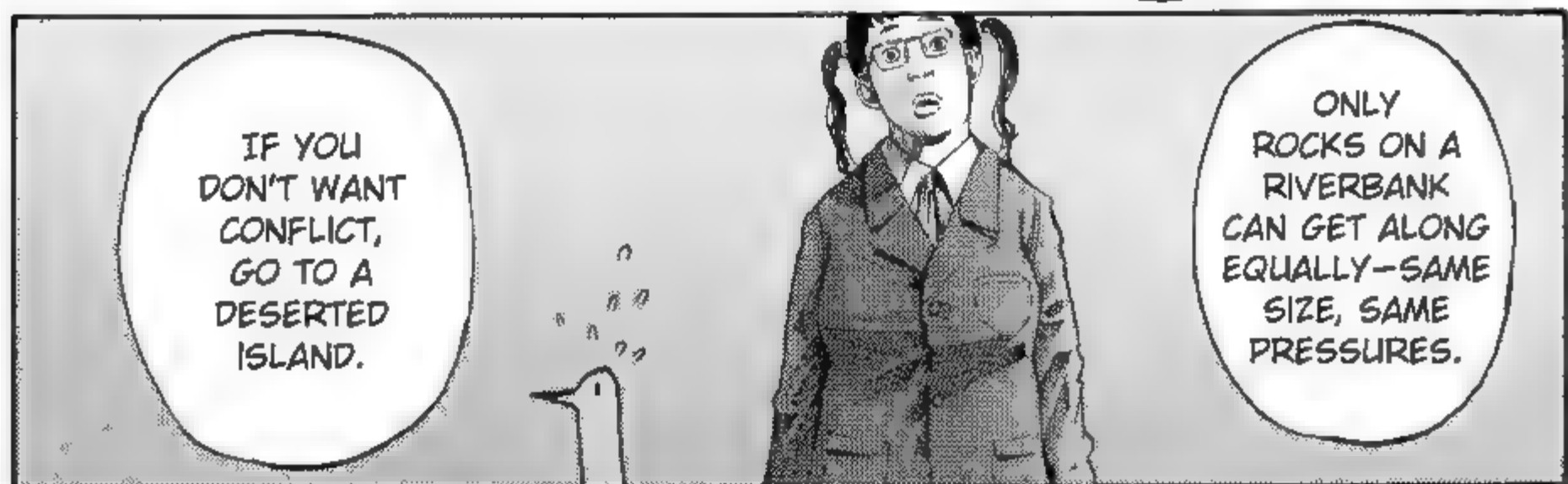


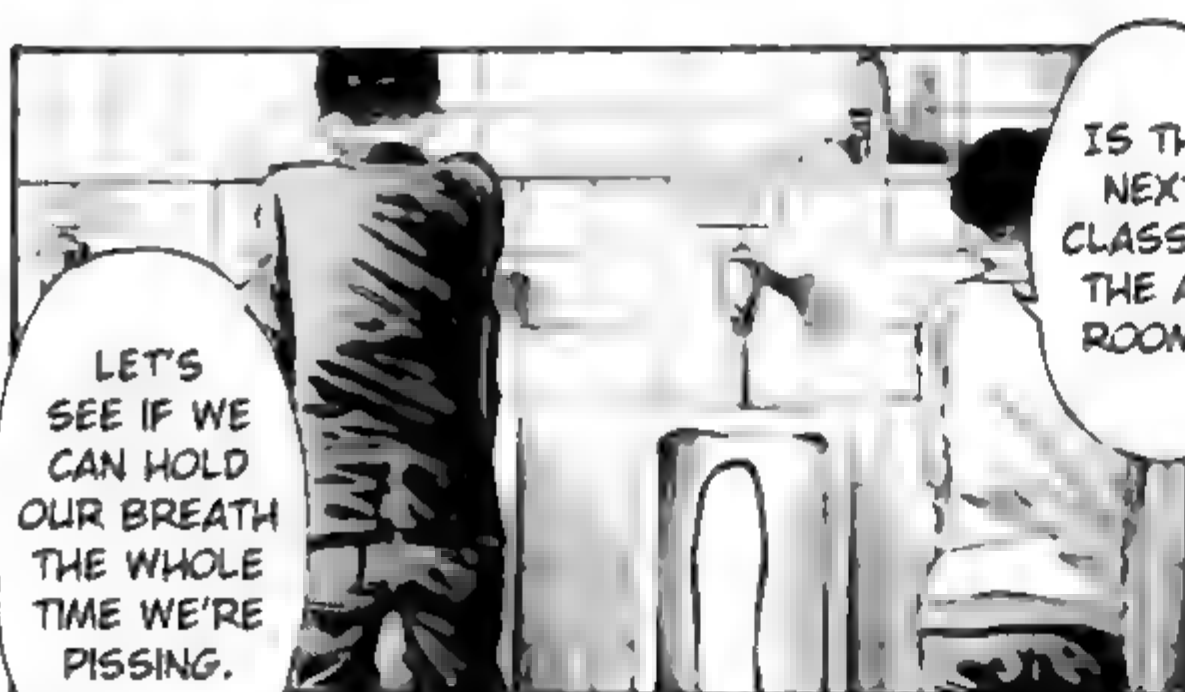
...BUT AS
FAR AS I'M
CONCERNED,
THOSE'RE
JUST OPIATES
FOR THE
LOSERS.

PEOPLE
LOVE
WORDS
LIKE
"EQUALITY"
AND
"PEACE"...

WHEN WE'RE
STANDING ON
THE COURT
OF LIFE, WE
SHOULD PLAY
HARD FOR THE
UPPER HAND.

AND IT'S
NOT JUST
ABOUT
SPORTS...





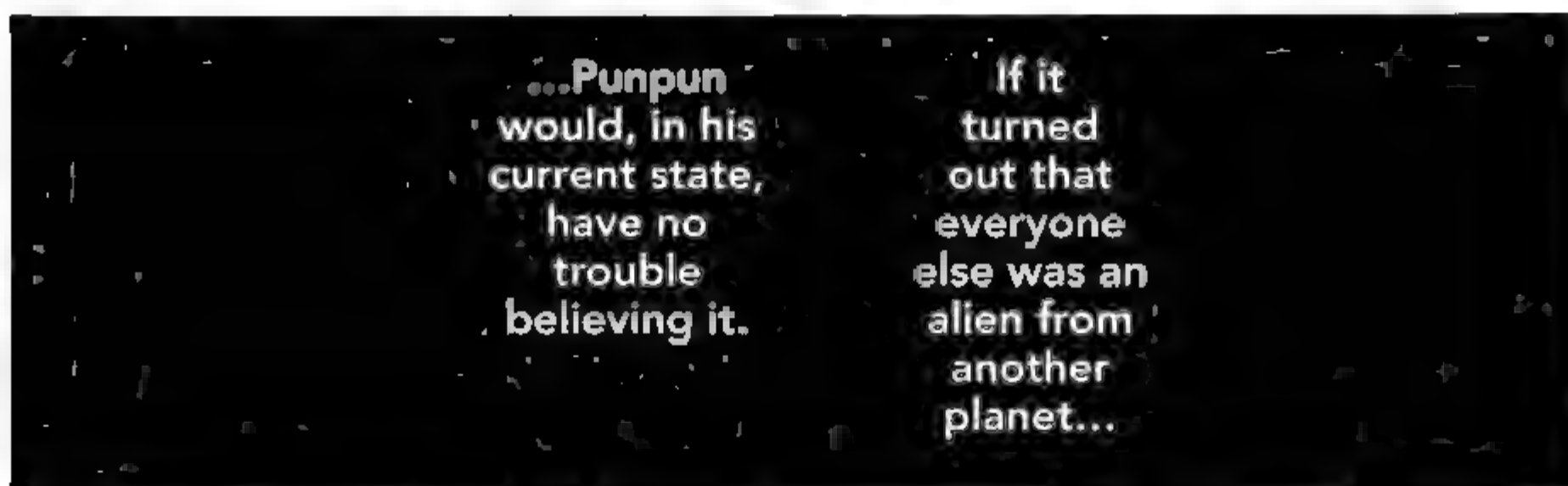
LET'S
SEE IF WE
CAN HOLD
OUR BREATH
THE WHOLE
TIME WE'RE
PISSING.

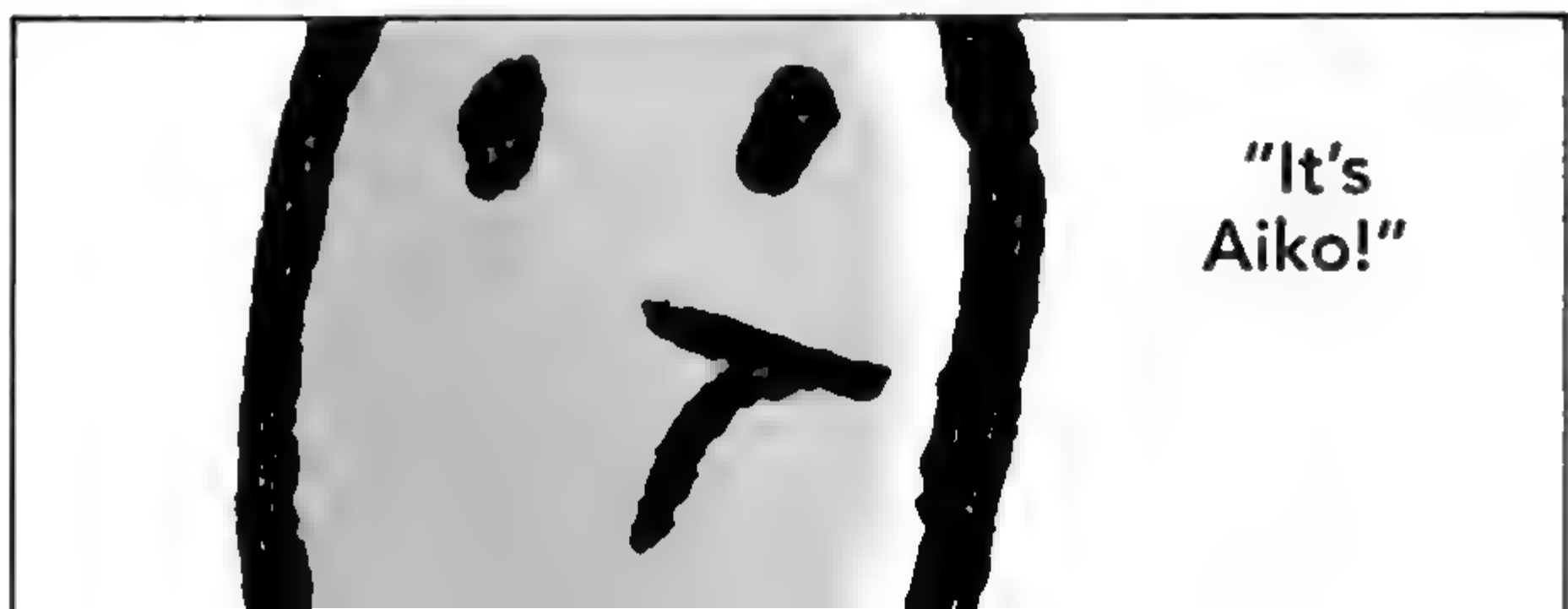
IS THE
NEXT
CLASS IN
THE AV
ROOM?

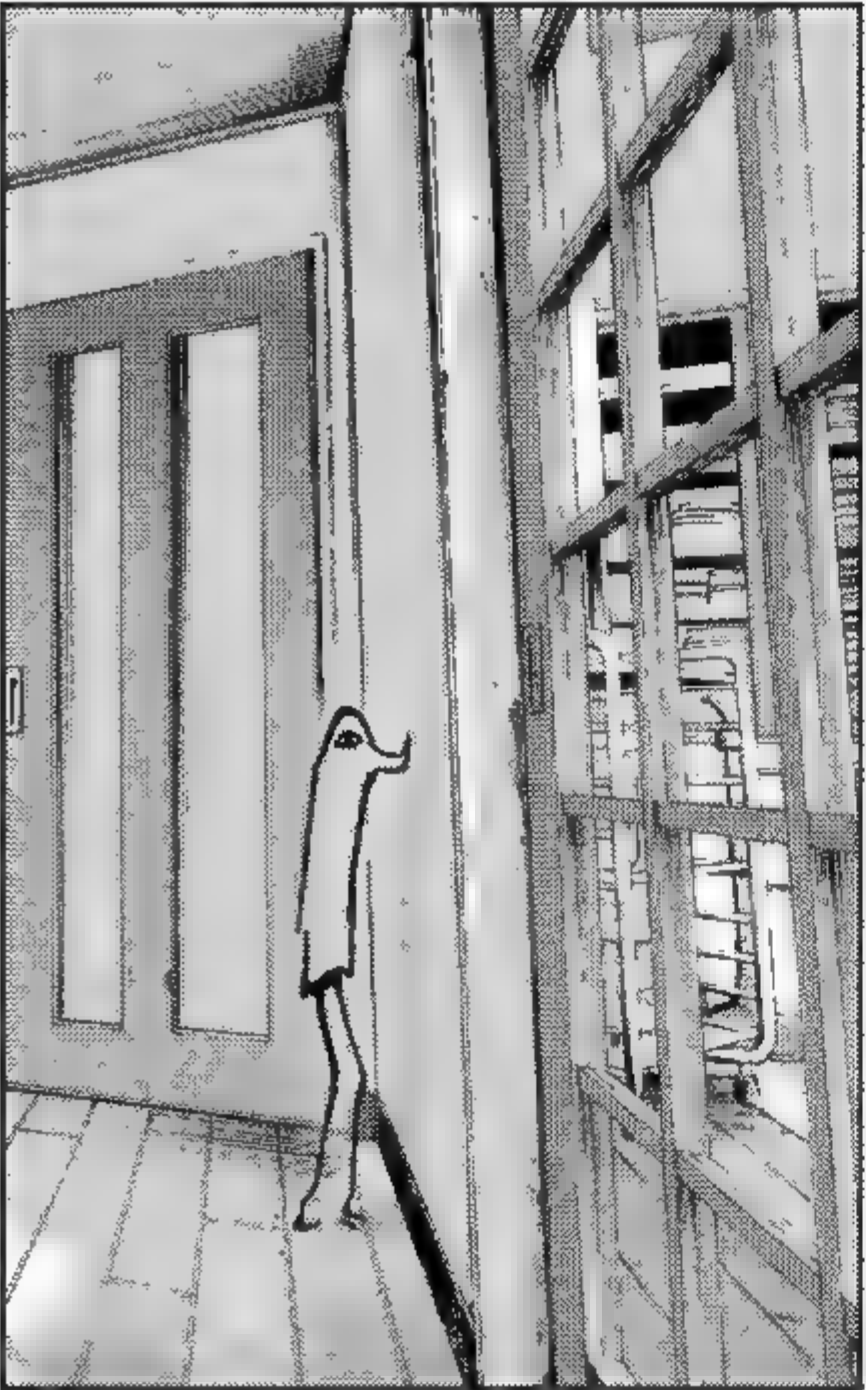
Punpun
wasn't
sure what
Komatsu
was talking
about.

...why it was
wrong to want
everyone to
be happy.

But he
wondered...



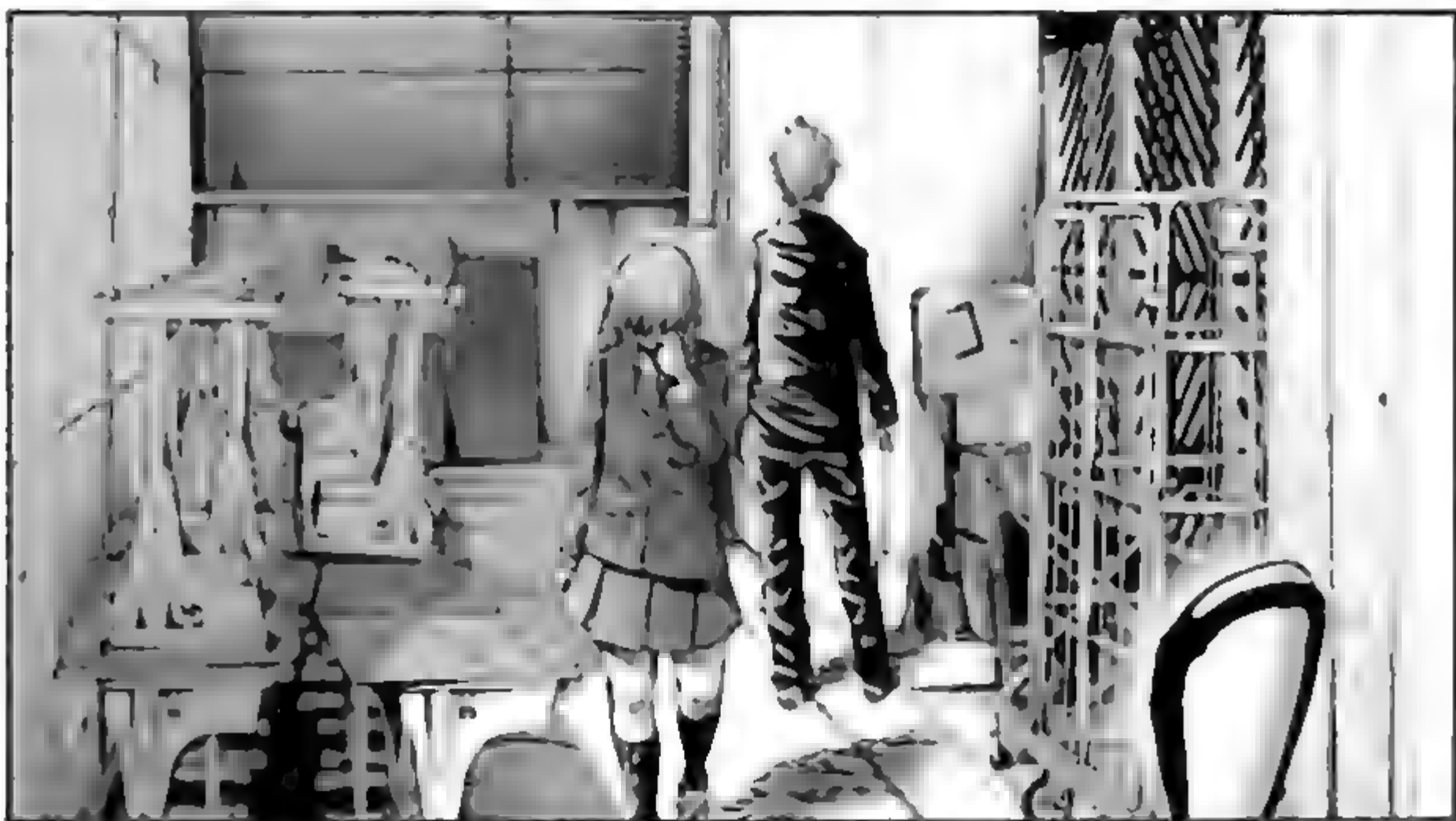






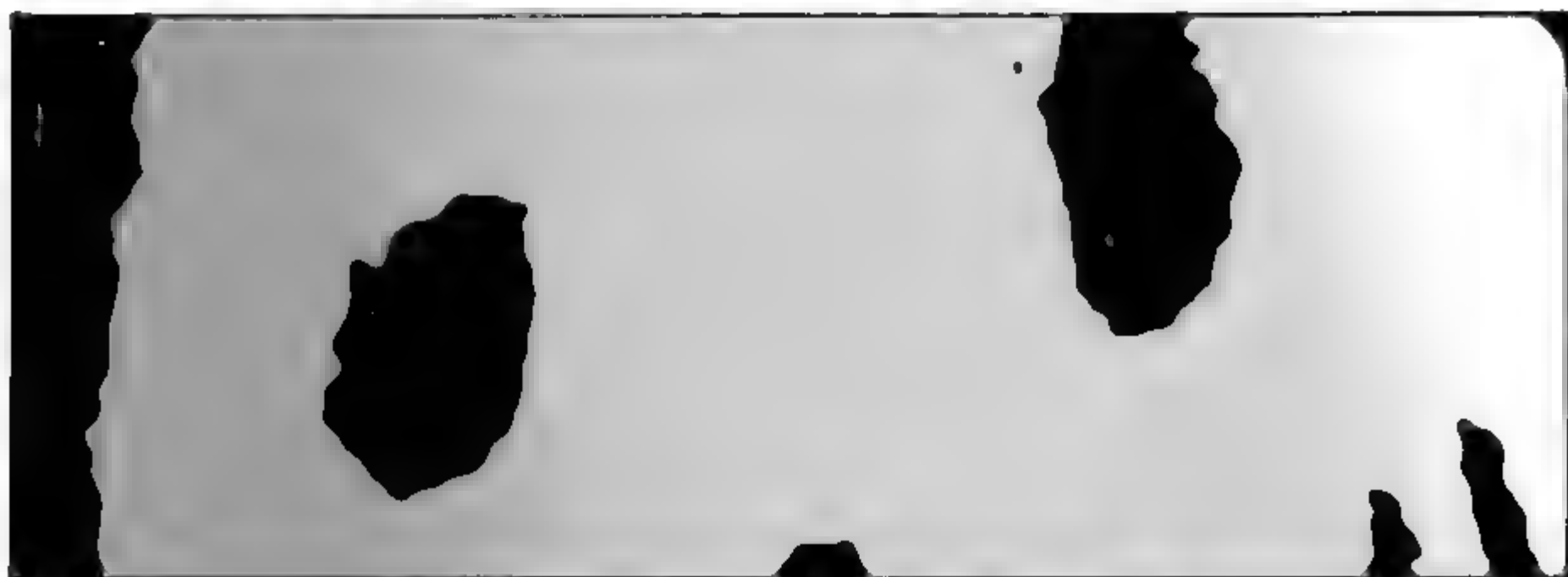


Aiko
is
crying!



Aiko is
headed
this way!







She'd
ignored
him.

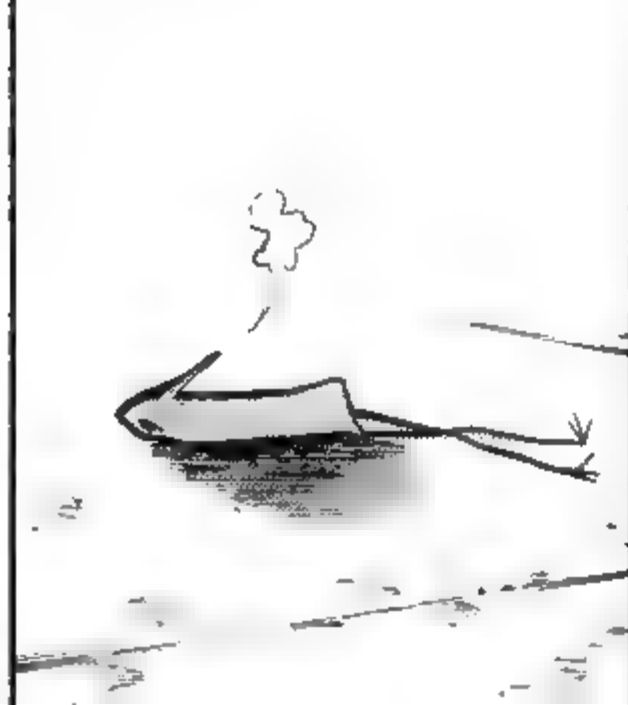
Punpun
was sick
of his own
optimism.

"That
would
be...
good..."


"Oh, of course!
In the last two
years, Aiko's
eyesight has really
deteriorated.

Punpun
knew
there
must be
a good
reason.

No way.
Aiko
wasn't
that
mean.




Oh, that's it!
 Aiko had feelings
 for me all this time;
 For Yaguchi coerced
 but Yaguchi going out
 her into. Plus he
 with him. Plus he
 with a threatened
 must've talked to
 her if she talked to
 other guys. Of course
 that must be it!



Punpun
 was
 starting
 to hate
 himself.

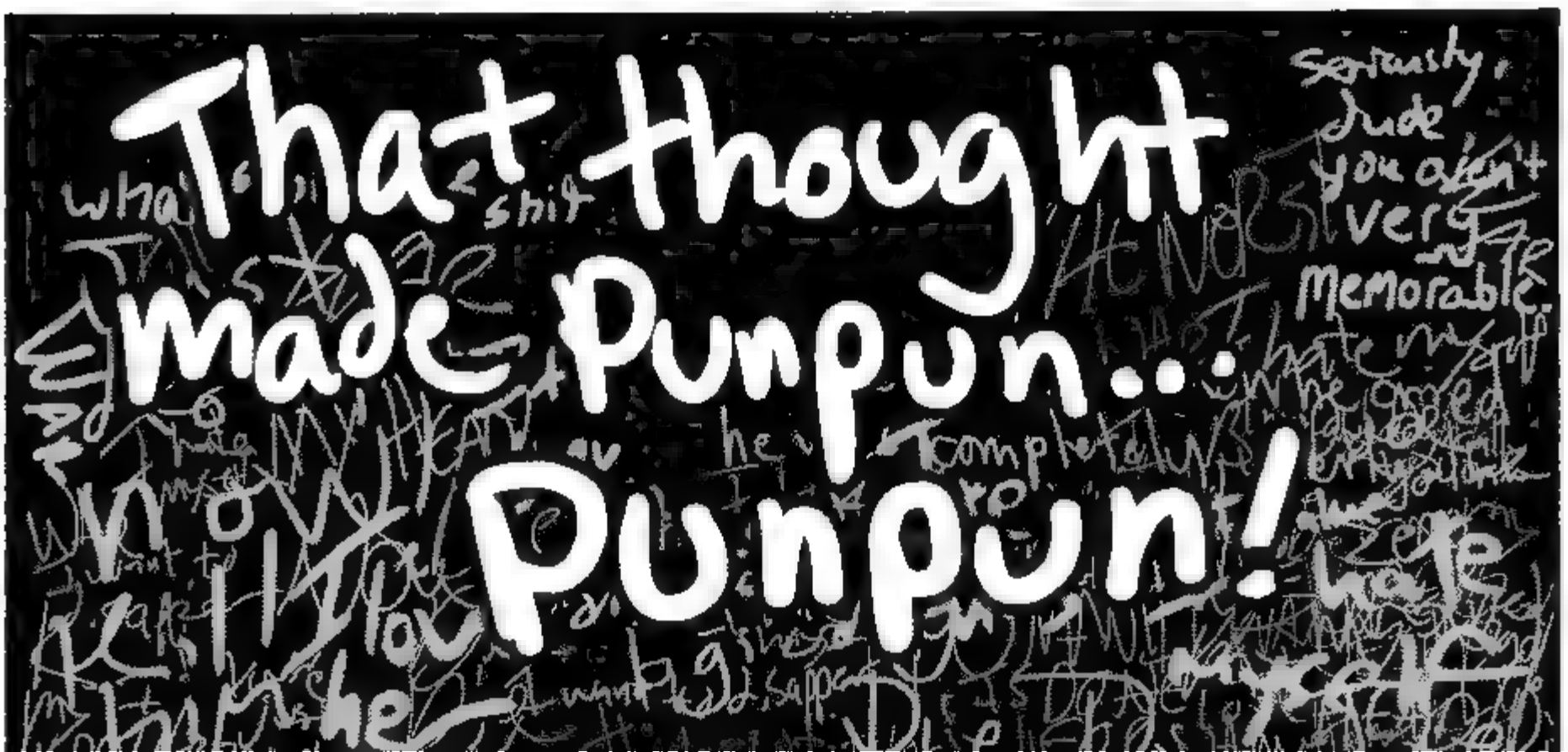
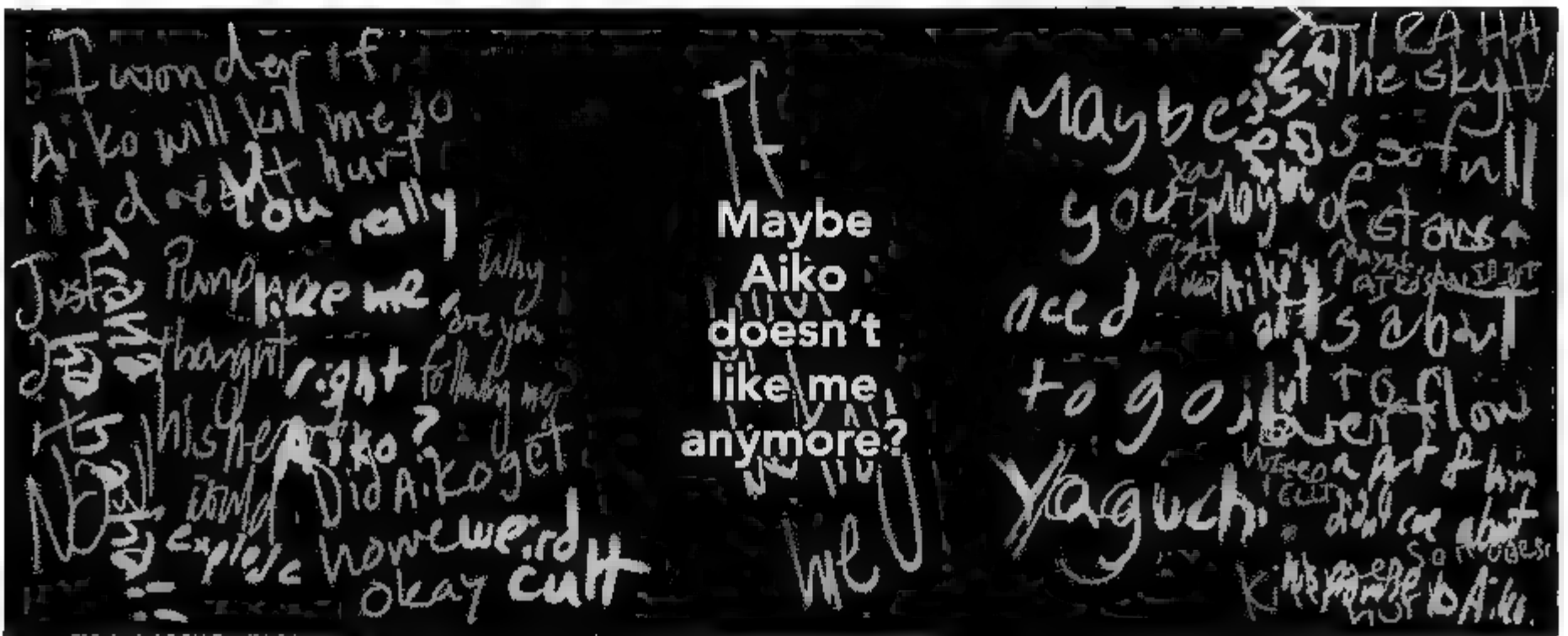
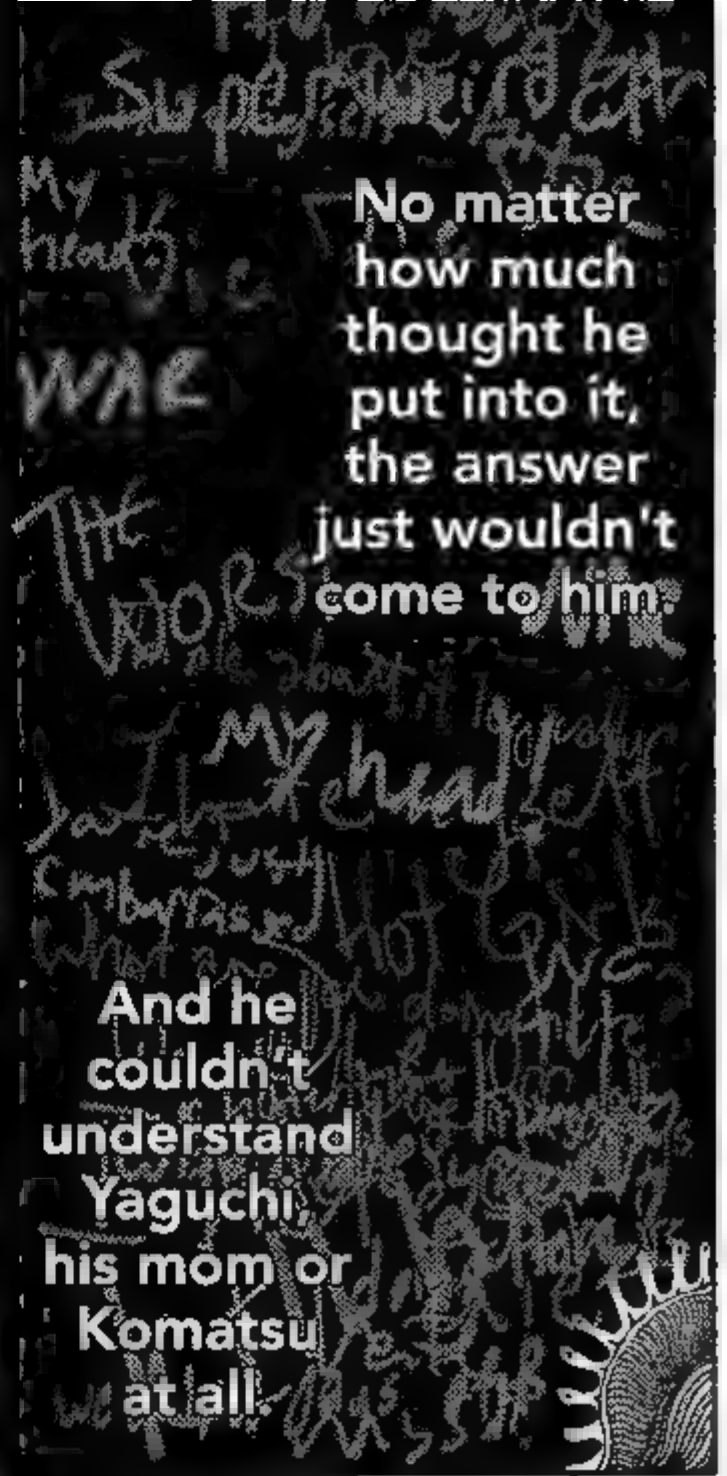
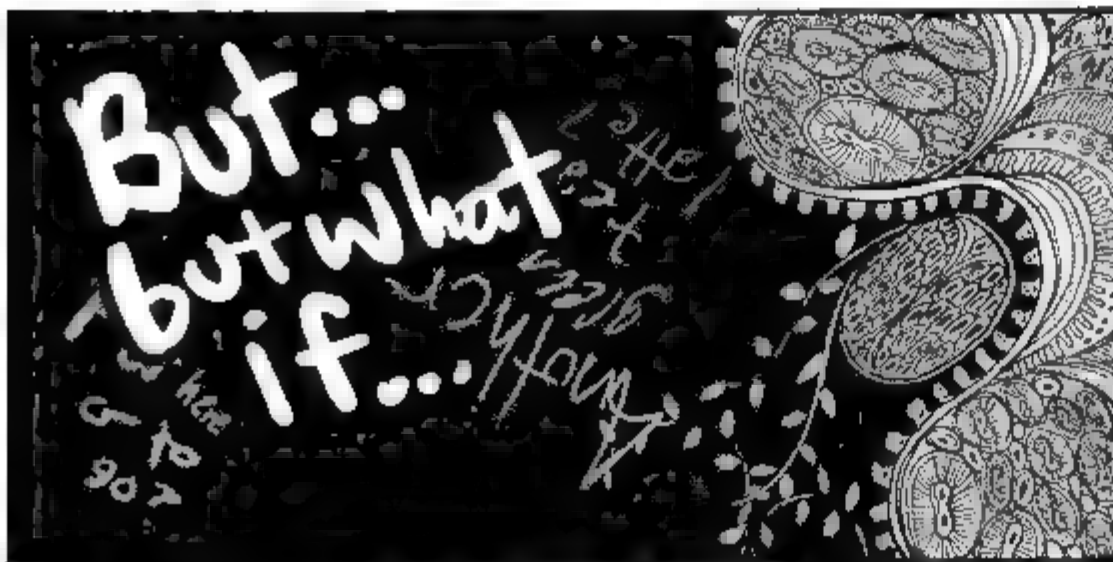
RAHA HAHA

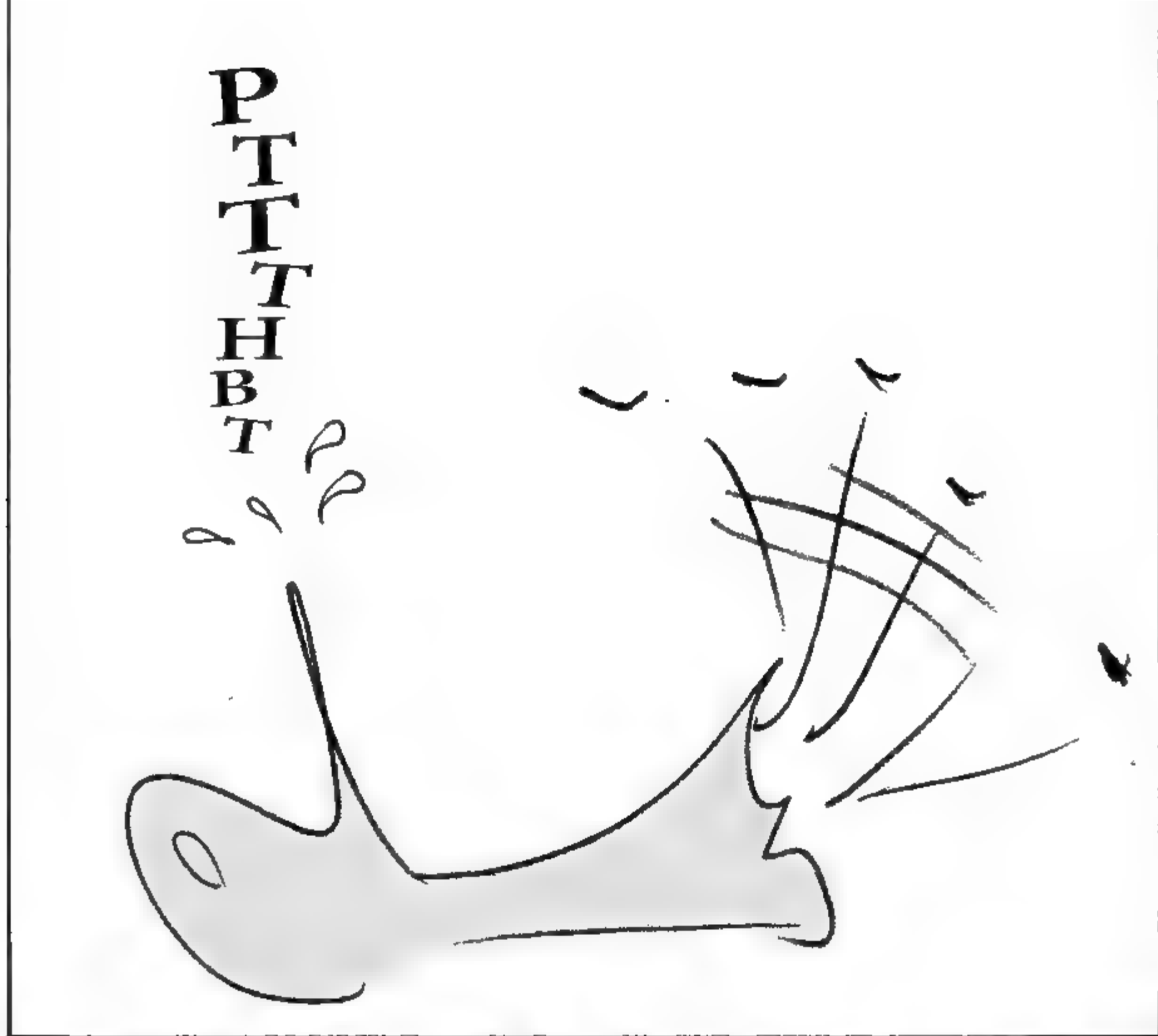
"Yaguchi
 isn't
 like
 that."



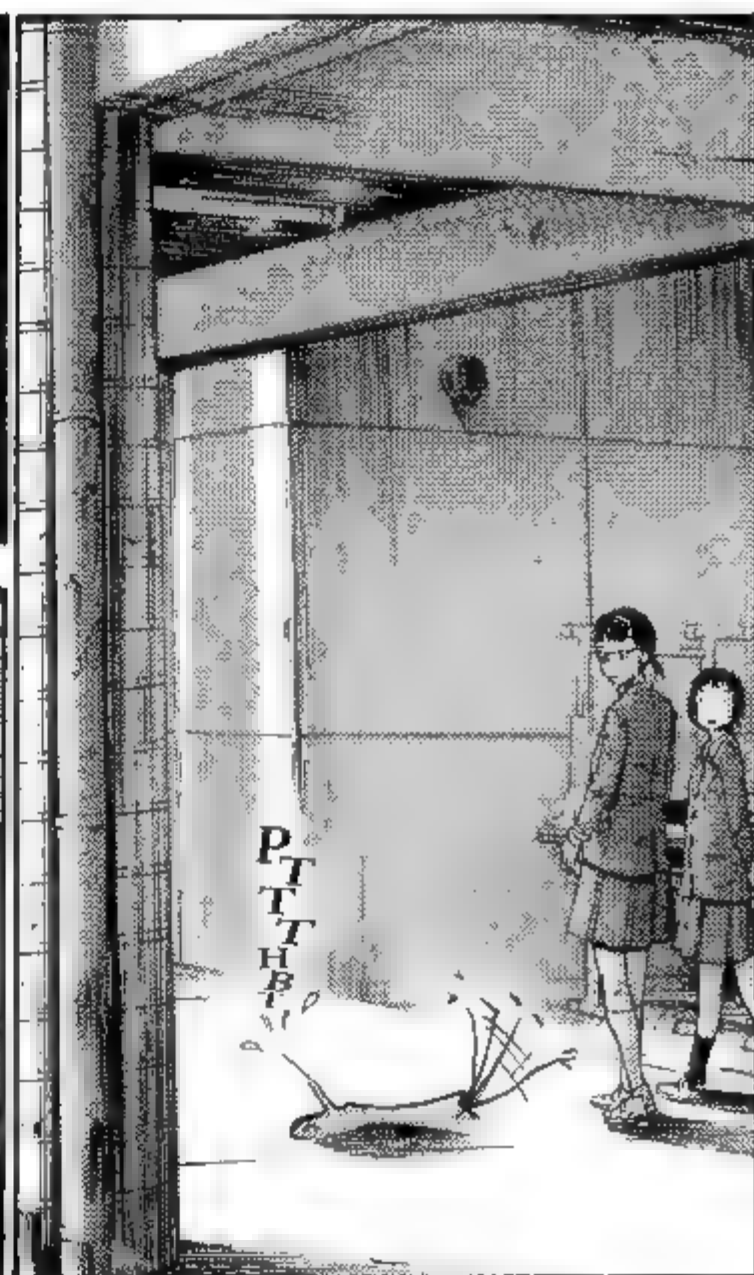
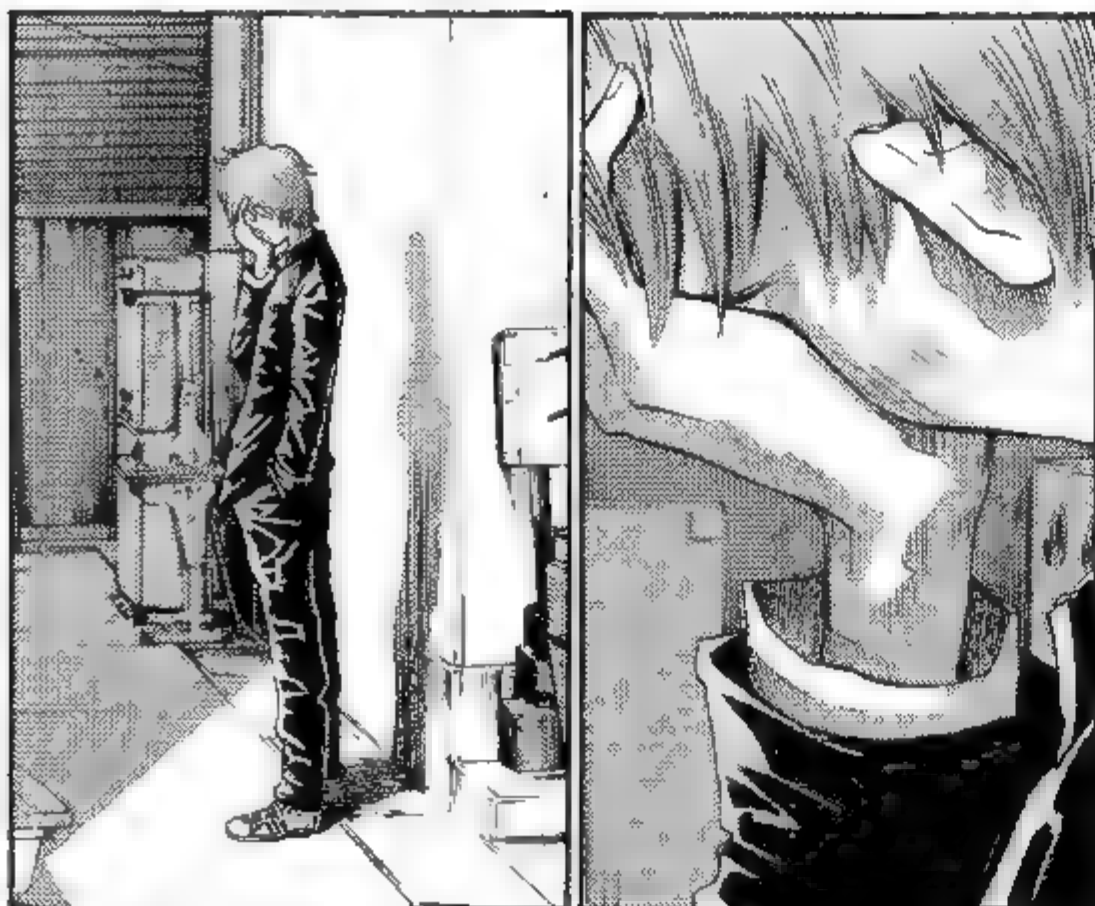
But if Aiko was crying,
 then Yaguchi must
 have done something to
 make her sad. Punpun
 really wanted to know what.

What a
 lowlife—
 Yaguchi is
 just scum!
 The jealous
 monster!
 Maybe I should
 hit him on the
 head from
 behind?





Punpun
thought his
chest would
explode.





KO-
MATSU

YAGUCHI

IWA-
MOTO

HONDA



HEY, YOU
FIRST-YEAR
OVER THERE,
PAY
ATTENTION.

WMM THE
NORTHERN
PREFECTURE
TOURNAMENT
IS NEXT
WEEK...
THOSE OF
YOU WHO
WEREN'T
SELECTED,
CHEER YOUR
TEAMMATES
ON!



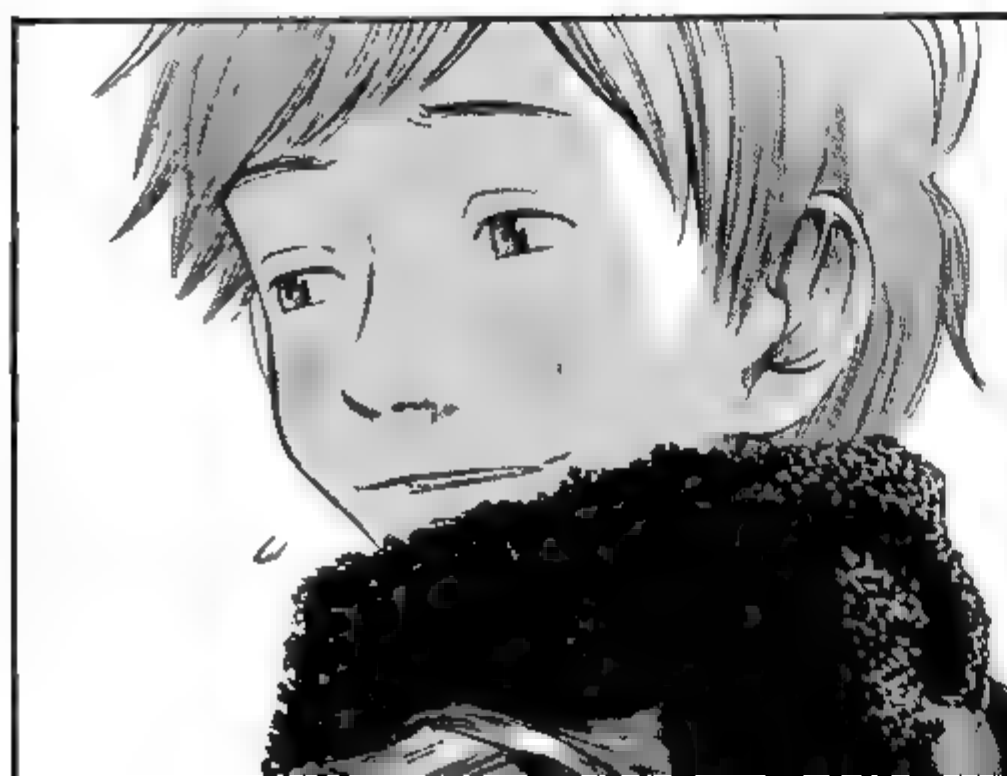
HEEEY!



...so he
decided to fill
his head with
choco pies and
space instead.

Punpun felt
like his brain
might explode
if he thought
any more...







I
DON'T
KNOW...

WE HELD
HANDS ONCE,
BUT SHE
HASN'T LET
ME TOUCH
HER SINCE.

...THAT
GIRL I TOLD
YOU ABOUT
YESTERDAY?

YOU
KNOW
...



WHAT
DO YOU
THINK'S
UP WITH
THAT?



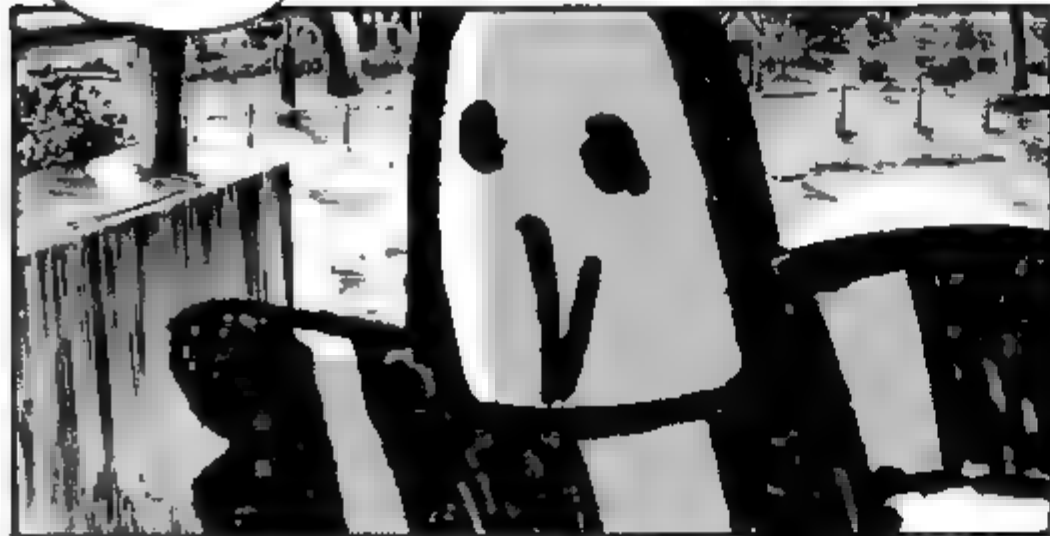
Punpun
had no way
of knowing
what Aiko
was thinking.

SHE'S THE
ONE WHO
ASKED ME
OUT.



...I TOLD HER ABOUT YOU AT LUNCH TODAY.

OH YEAH...



...HER FACE JUST...

AND THEN...



ACTUALLY, SHE WAS CRYING.

I ASKED HER WHAT WAS WRONG, BUT SHE WOULDN'T ANSWER.



...AND
AIKO USED
TO HAVE
SOMETHING
GOING ON?

SO
DID
YOU...



SAY
SOME-
THING
...

...OR
I'LL DO
SOMETHING
REALLY
EMBAR-
RASSING...

MAYBE
YOU'RE
THE
ONE...

...SHE
REALLY
LOVES,
ONODERA?



I'D
EASIER
GIVE UP
ELEMINTON
FOR THAT!

...AND
FIGURED I
SHOULD GET A
JOB AS SOON
AS POSSIBLE
SO I CAN
MAKE THINGS
EASIER ON
HER.

SO I
THOUGHT
ABOUT IT
REALLY
HARD...

YOU KNOW,
AIKO GOES
STRAIGHT
HOME AFTER
SCHOOL...

I HEARD
SHE TAKES
CARE OF
HER SICK
DAD.



I
THOUGHT,
"I HAVE TO
DO SOME-
THING ABOUT
THAT!"

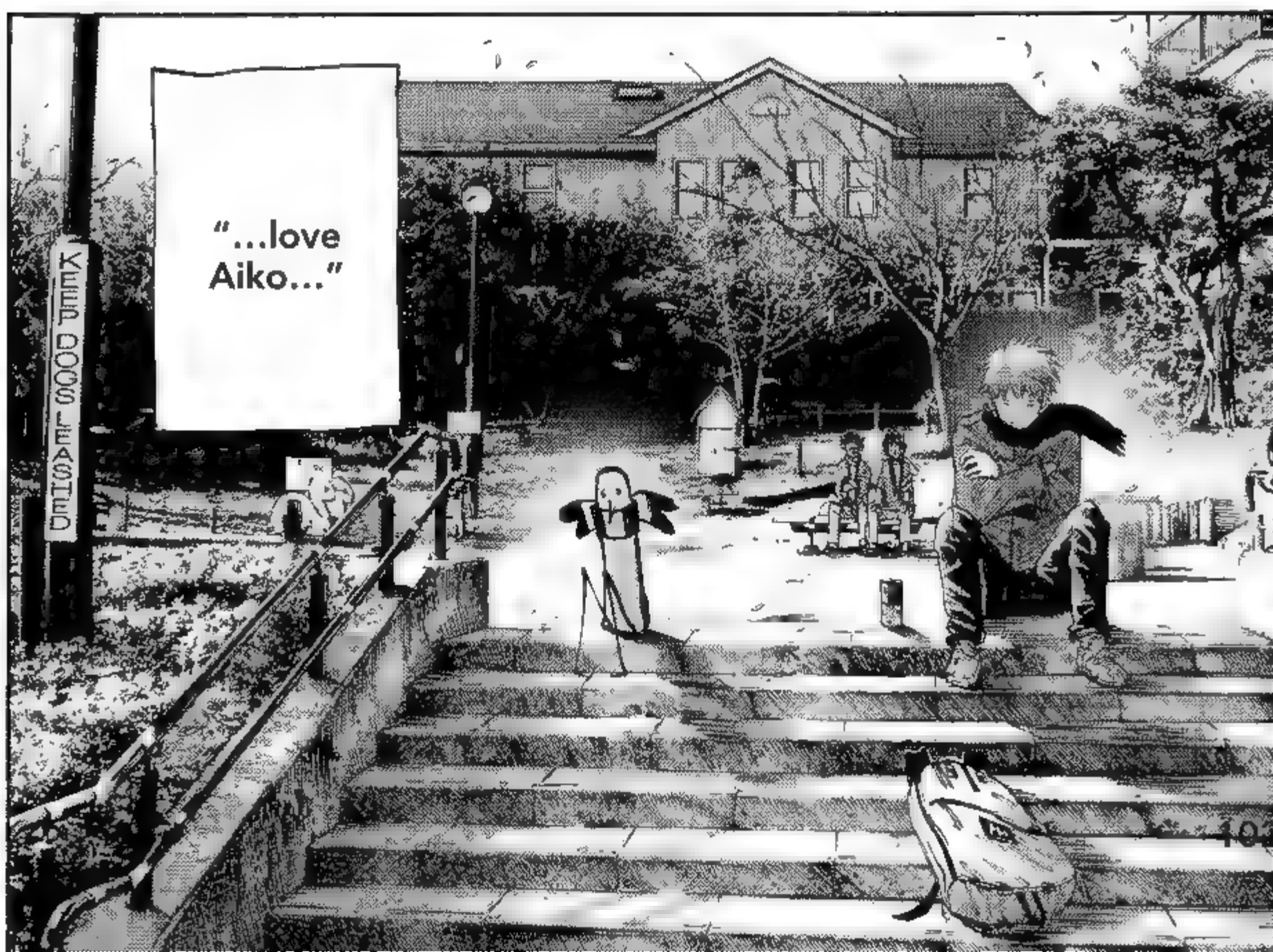
IT'S
BECAUSE
SHE
ALWAYS
LOOKS SO
SAD.

"That
hasn't
changed."

"Aiko does
always look
a little sad.

...Punpun
thought.

"That's
right..."







"I love
Aiko..."

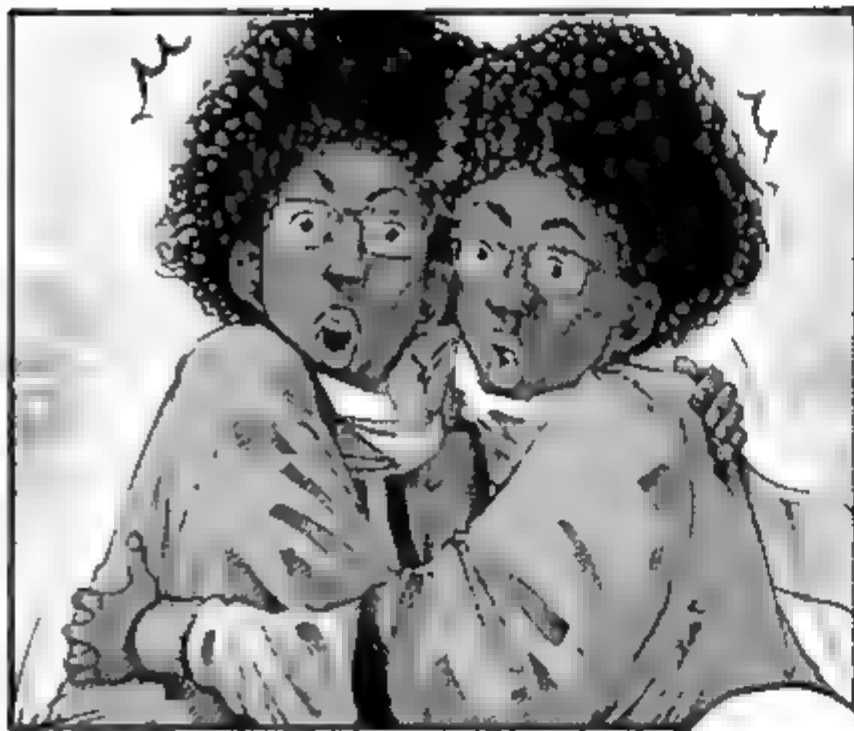


"I don't
know how
Aiko feels,
but I love
her," Punpun
said in
almost a
whisper.

...I'M NOT
ASKING YOU
HOW YOU
FEEL...

ONODERA...







I CAN'T
DO IT...
I CAN'T
CHOOSE
BETWEEN
THEM...

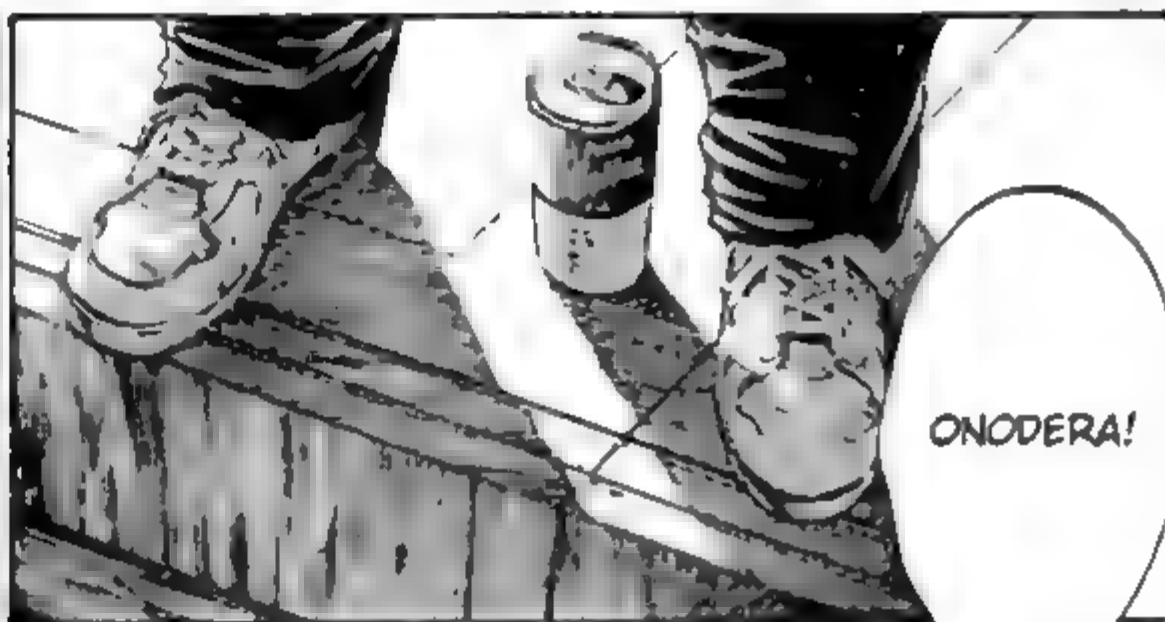
WHAT IS
THIS...?

SHIT...

IF I CAN'T
HAVE BOTH,
THEN I
DON'T WANT
EITHER.



BUT...



ONODERA!



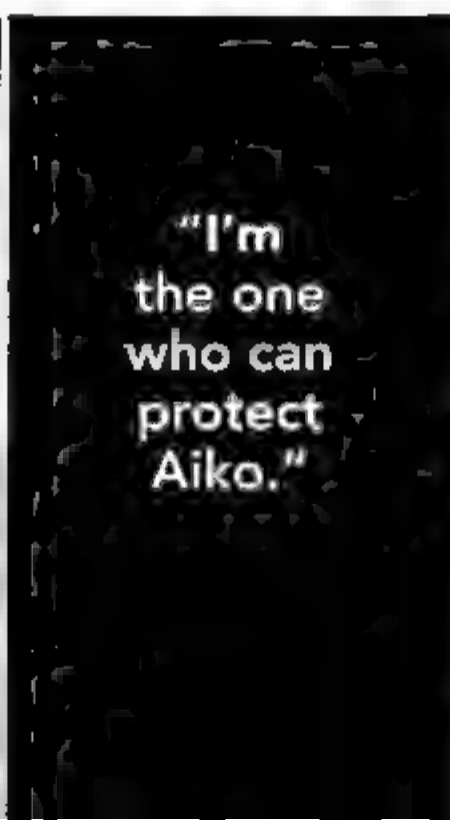
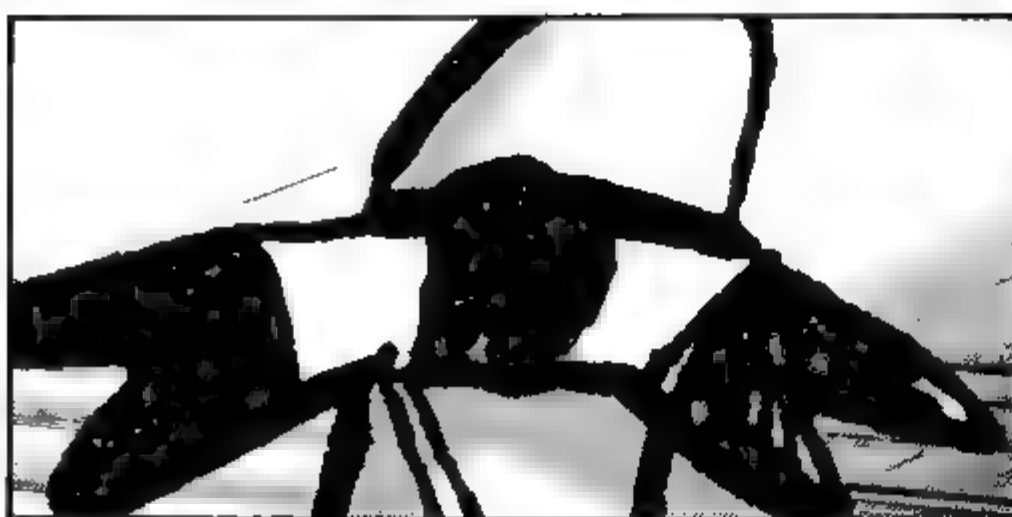
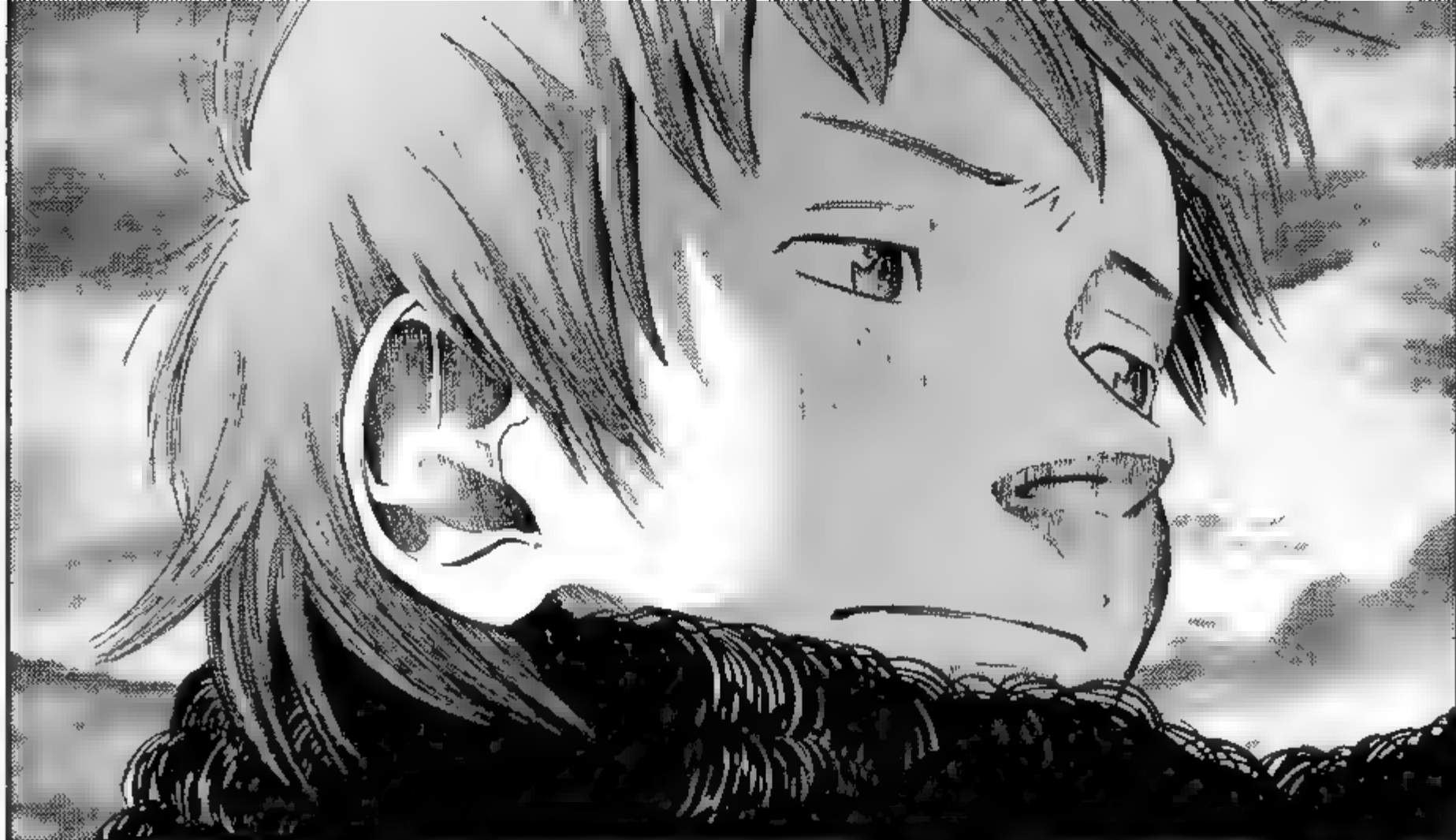
AND YOU
HAVE TO
TELL HER
HOW YOU
FEEL.

IF I DON'T
WIN THE
TOURNAMENT
NEXT WEEK,
I'LL FORGET
ALL ABOUT
AIKO!

...THEN
AIKO IS
MINE FOR
LIFE!

...I
WIN...







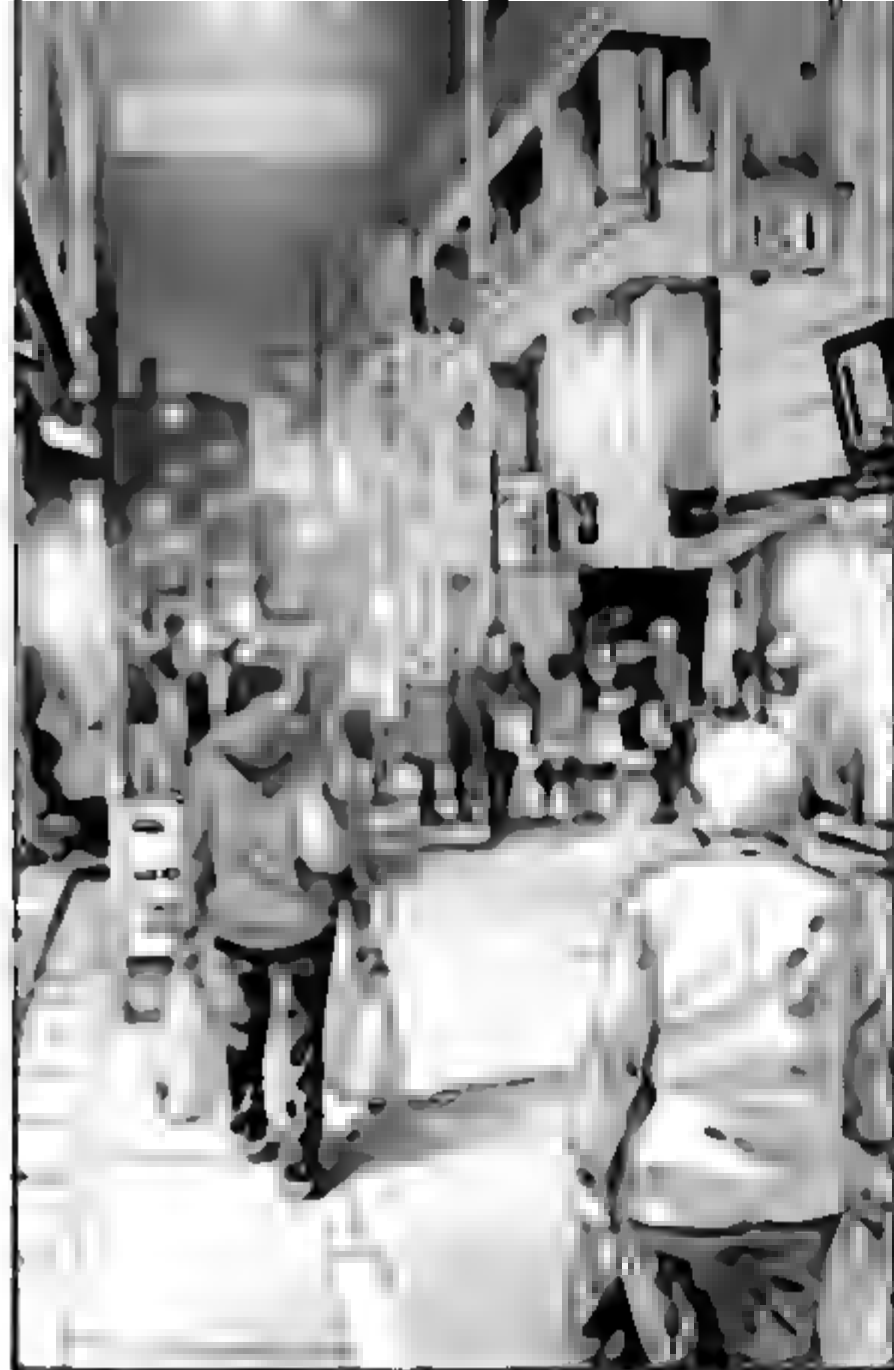
A black and white photograph of a city street at night. A bright comet streaks diagonally across the sky from the upper left towards the center right. The street is lined with buildings, including a prominent multi-story building on the left and a tall, narrow building on the right. Several vintage cars are parked along the street. The overall atmosphere is dramatic and nostalgic.

GOODNIGHT PUNPUN

Part Three

INIO ASANO





...AND THEN SHE GETS IN A SUPER-BAD MOOD. WHY ARE WOMEN SO SELFISH? HONESTLY, IT'S ASTOUNDING.

AND SHE HASN'T EVEN TAKEN THE TEST YET, BUT SHE'S ASKING ME, "WHAT WOULD YOU DO IF I HAD IT?" SO I SAY, "WELL, THIS ISN'T AN IDEAL TIME, IF WE'RE BEING REALISTIC..."

I MEAN, YEAH, I DON'T WEAR A RUBBER, BUT SHE'S THE ONE WHO SAYS SHE CAN'T COME IF I WRAP IT UP.

I DON'T KNOW, MY GIRLFRIEND SAID HER PERIOD'S LATE...



YOU'RE
PLENTY
DETER-
MINED.

SO THAT'S
THE WHOLE
FANTASY
SCENARIO
I CAME UP
WITH IN BED
YESTERDAY.

HOW DO
I FIND A
GIRLFRIEND?



...BUT IF YOU
DON'T WANT TO
EXPERIENCE
THE FURTHER
TERROR OF
WITHDRAWAL,
BEING ALONE IS
DEFINITELY NOT
A MISTAKE.

WELL, LOVE
IS LIKE A
DRUG TO
COUNTERACT
THE TERROR
OF SOLITUDE...



YUICHI,
DO YOU
THINK
BEING
ALIVE IS
FUN?



THIRTY-
THREE.



YUICHI...

...HOW
OLD ARE
YOU
NOW?



IT'S
NOT ABOUT
WHETHER OR
NOT IT'S FUN
ANYMORE...

WELL...
WHAT CAN
I SAY...?

THEN
WHAT IS
IT ABOUT,
YUICHI?

...THAT'S
REALLY
COOL.

WOW...

ATONEMENT,
MAYBE.

GO
FOR
IT.

...I'M
GOING TO
USE THAT
THE NEXT
TIME I
GO ON A
DATE.

WHOA
...



...YOU SHOULD BE OUT LIVING IT INSTEAD!



WHEN YOU'RE YOUNG...

...IF YOU HAVE THE TIME TO PONDER THE MEANING OF LIFE...

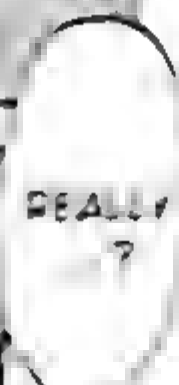


AS YOU GET OLDER YOU'LL FIGURE IT OUT ANYWAY ...



THE HELL WITH LOVE!









MY
SISTER
WAS
THERE
ABOUT
TWO
YEARS
AGO.



WELL,
ACTUALLY,
I WAS
THINKING
ABOUT IT
AFTERWARD,
AND...



...DIDN'T
YOU USE
TO WORK
AT THE
MUNICIPAL
HOSPITAL?



I-I'M
SO SORRY.
I HAVE
ACCIDENTS
LIKE THAT
A LOT...

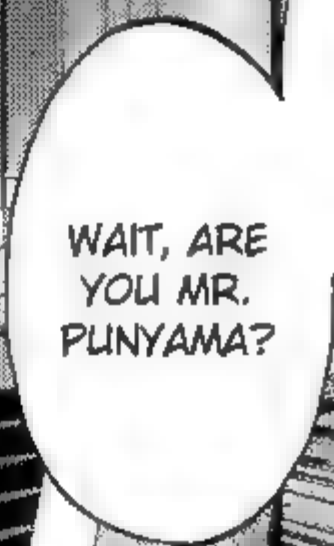


I NEVER
THOUGHT
YOU'D COME
BACK...



AND, WELL,
IT'S A LITTLE
COMPLICATED,
BUT WE
GO BY
ONODERA
NOW.

THAT'S RIGHT.
THAT LITTLE
DRACAENA
YOU GAVE US
WHEN SHE WAS
DISCHARGED IS
STILL IN OUR
LIVING ROOM...



WAIT, ARE
YOU MR.
PUNYAMA?

OH!



JUST
AMAZING...
HA HA HA...



WHAT AN
AMAZING
COINCIDENCE!

WOOOW!



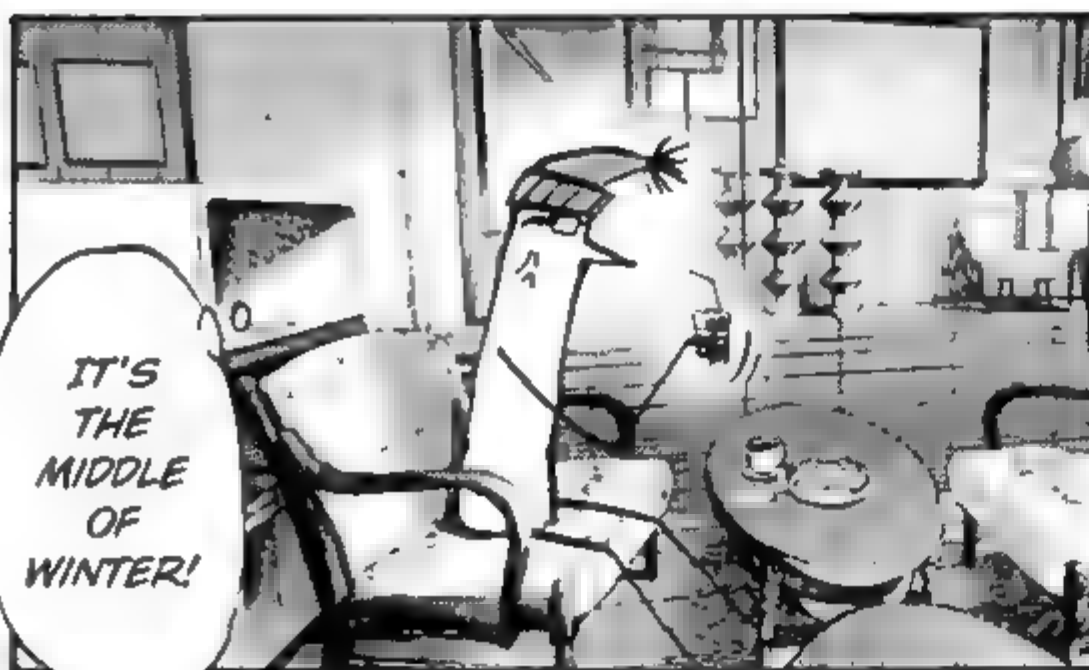


HERE
YOU
ARE!

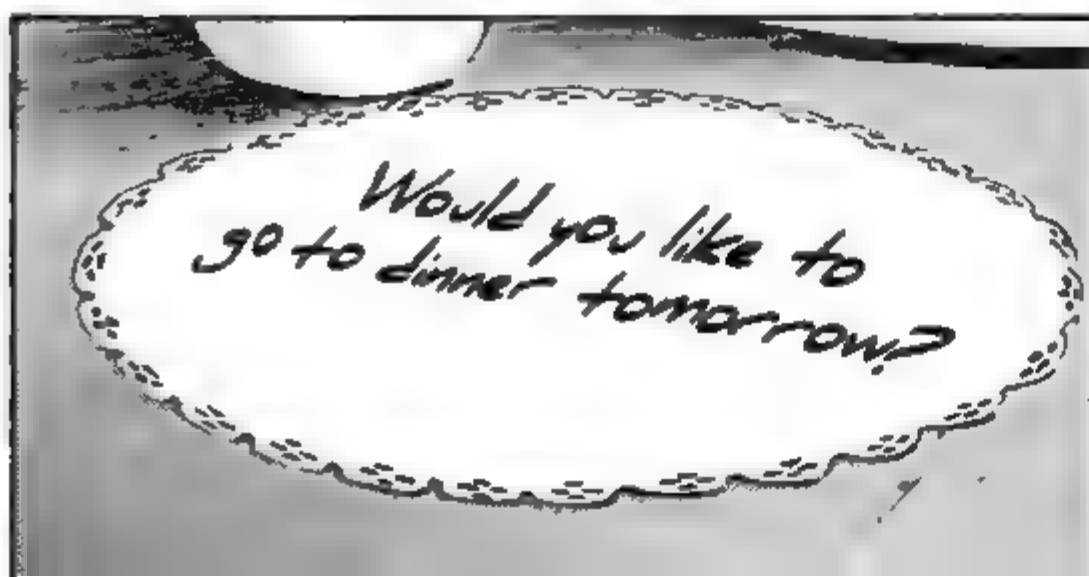


HEY,
YOU
REALLY
ARE
CLUMSY
...

I
DIDN'T
ORDER
AN ICED
COFFEE.



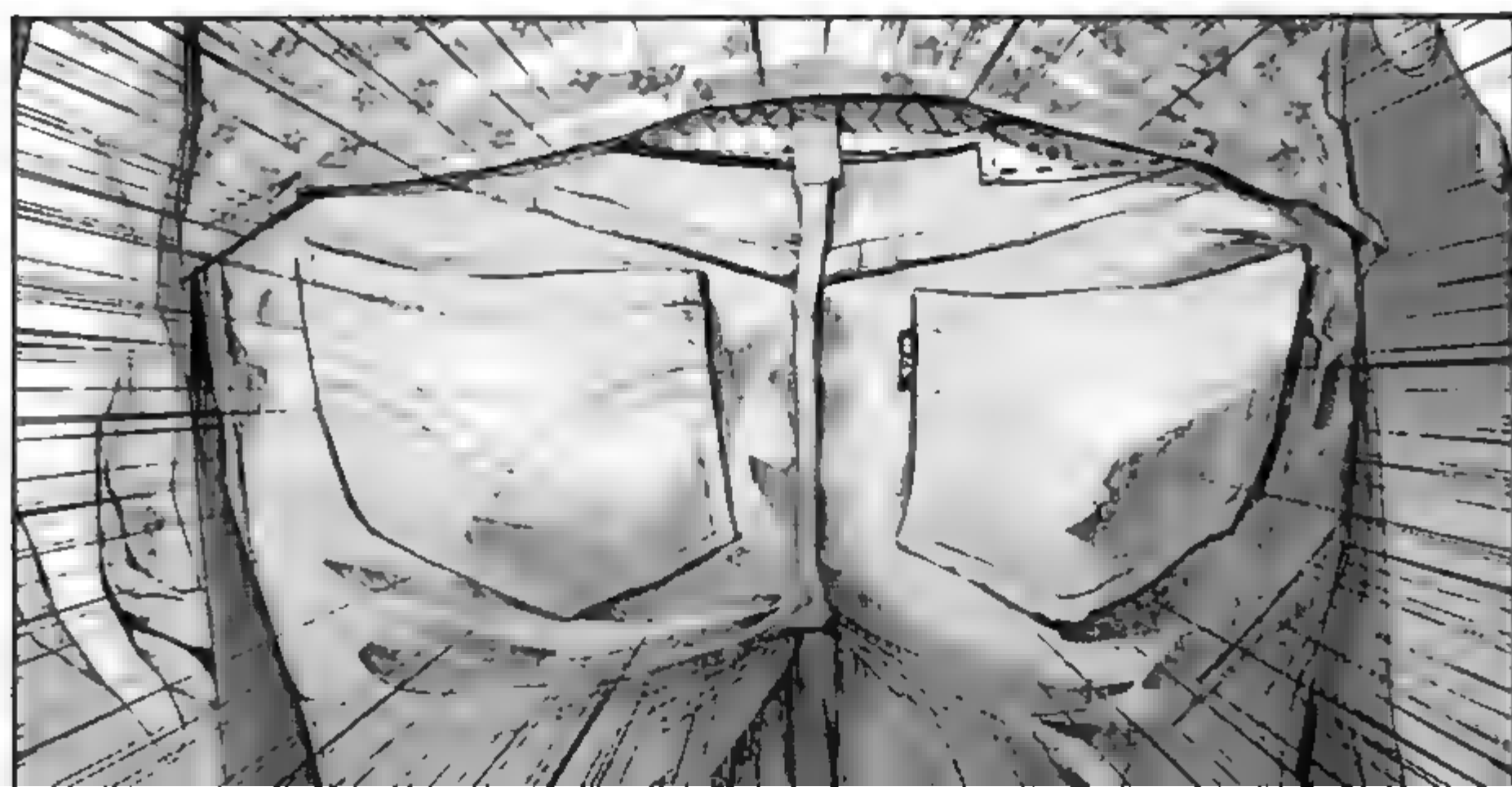
IT'S
THE
MIDDLE
OF
WINTER!

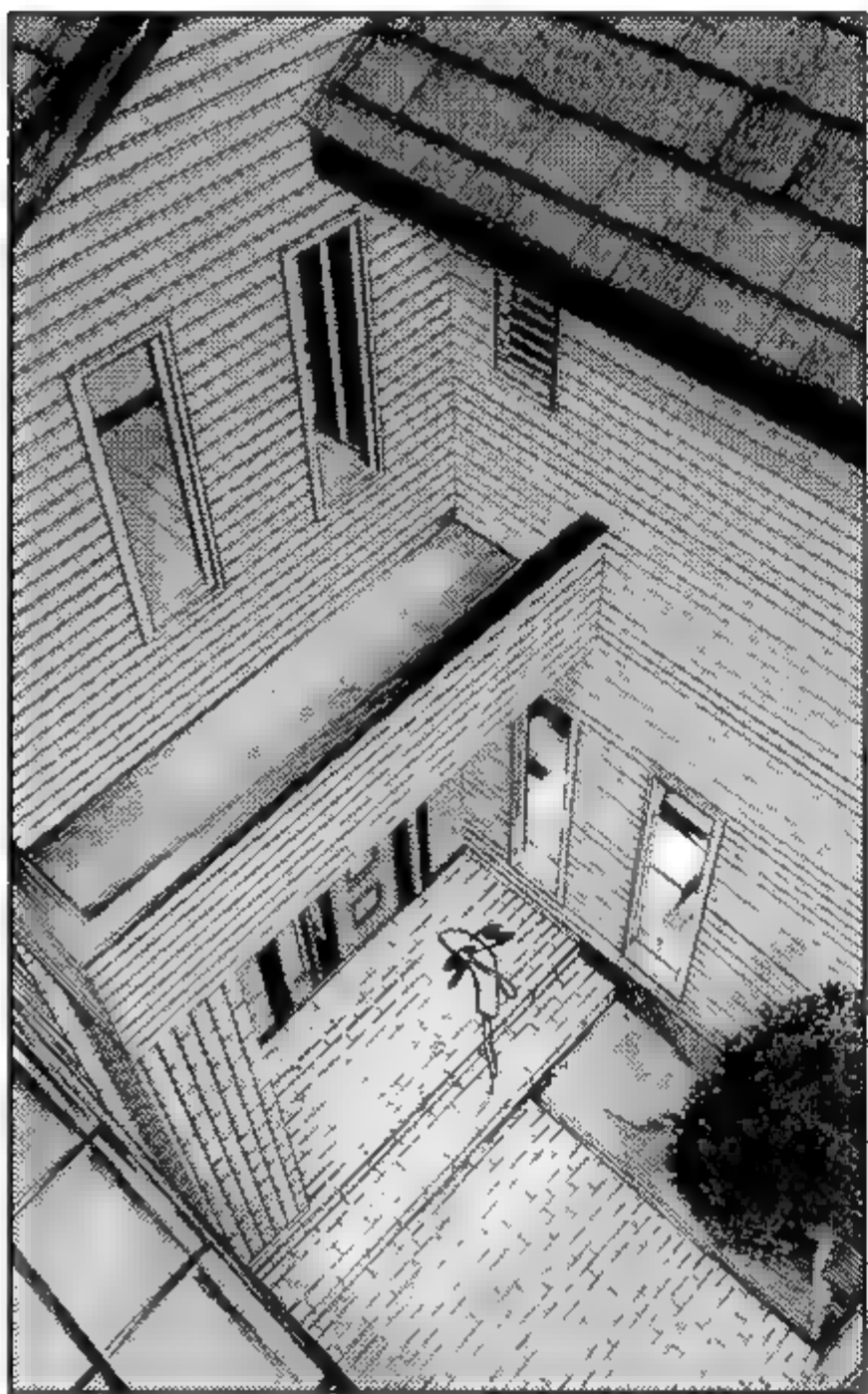


Would you like to
go to dinner tomorrow?



IT'S
ON THE
HOUSE!



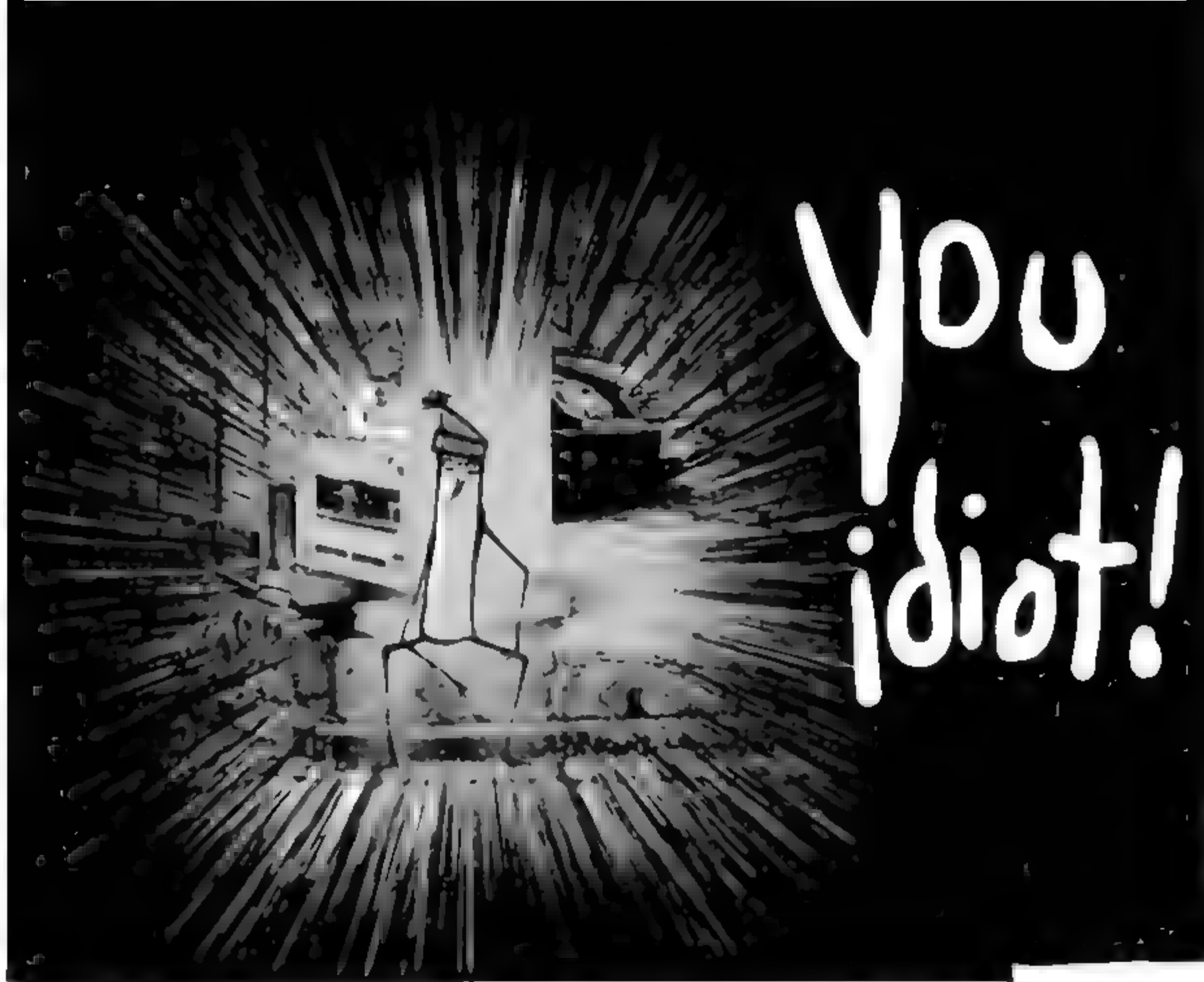






THANKS SO MUCH FOR ASKING ME OUT, BUT I WORK TOMORROW NIGHT.

WELL, I GUESS I COULD GET IT OFF.



You
idiot!

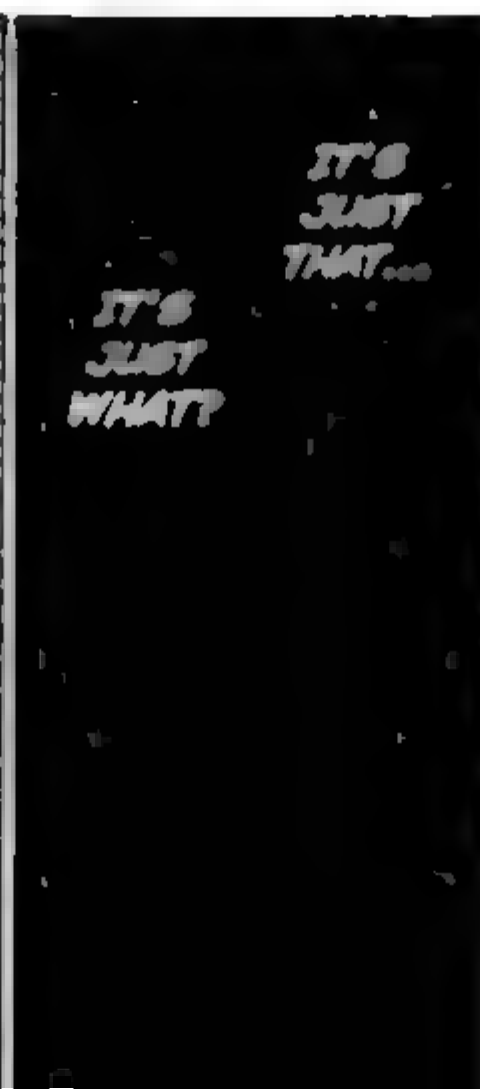


NO, NO,
I'M NOT
EXPECTING
ANYTHING...



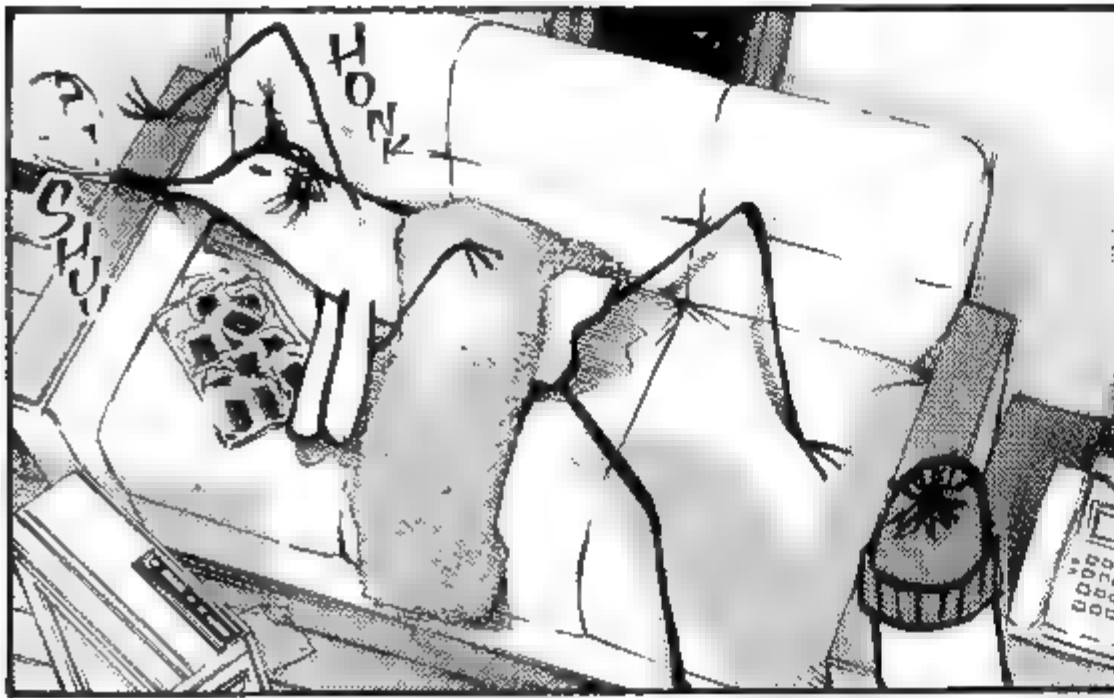
IT WAS
JUST A
YOUNG
WOMAN'S
WHIM.

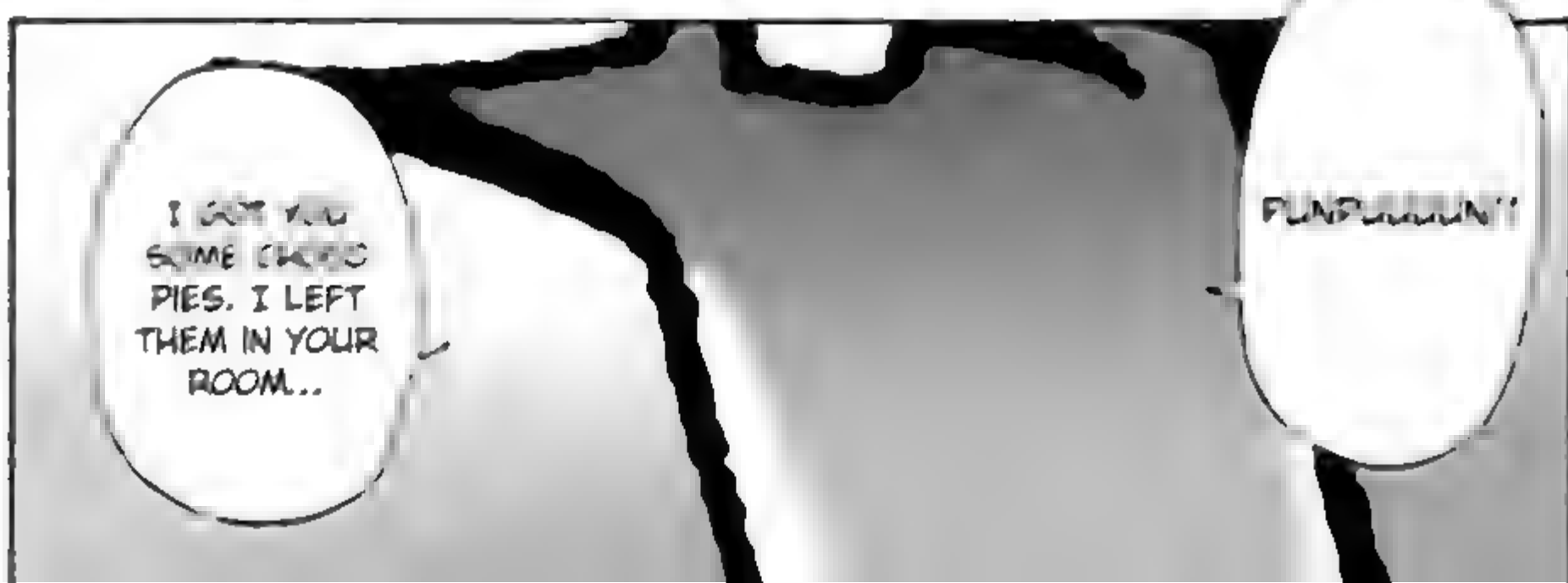
WHAT
ARE YOU
DOING,
FALLING
FOR THAT
AT YOUR
AGE?

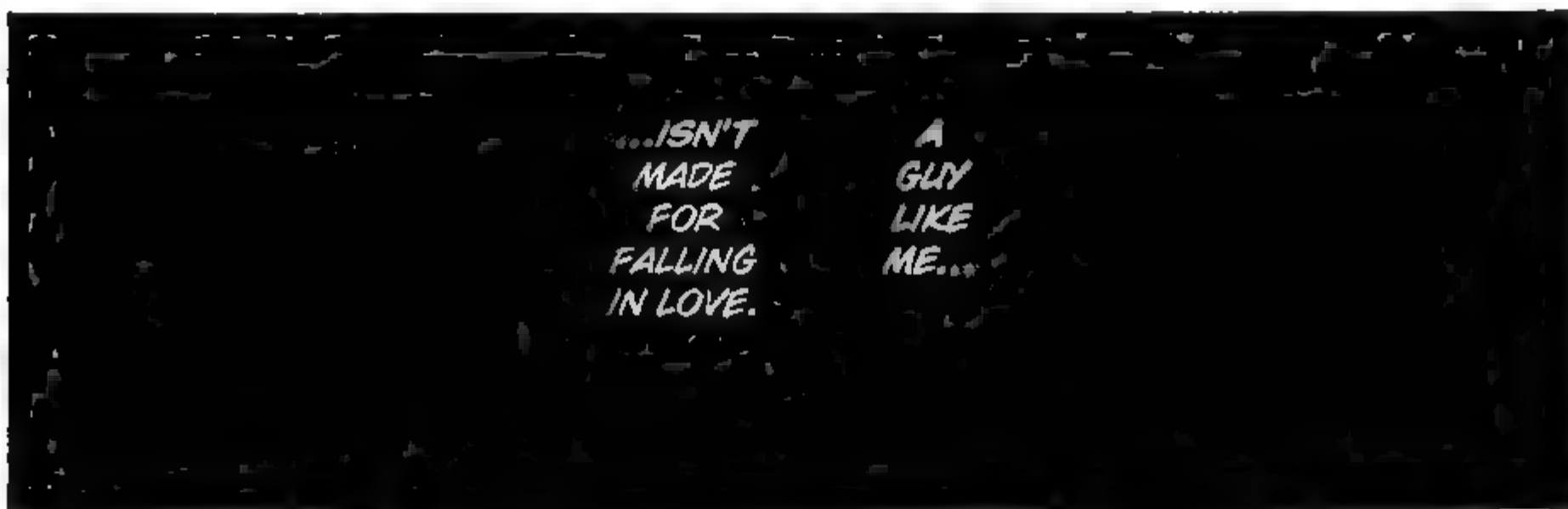


IT'S
JUST
THAT...

IT'S
JUST
WHAT?







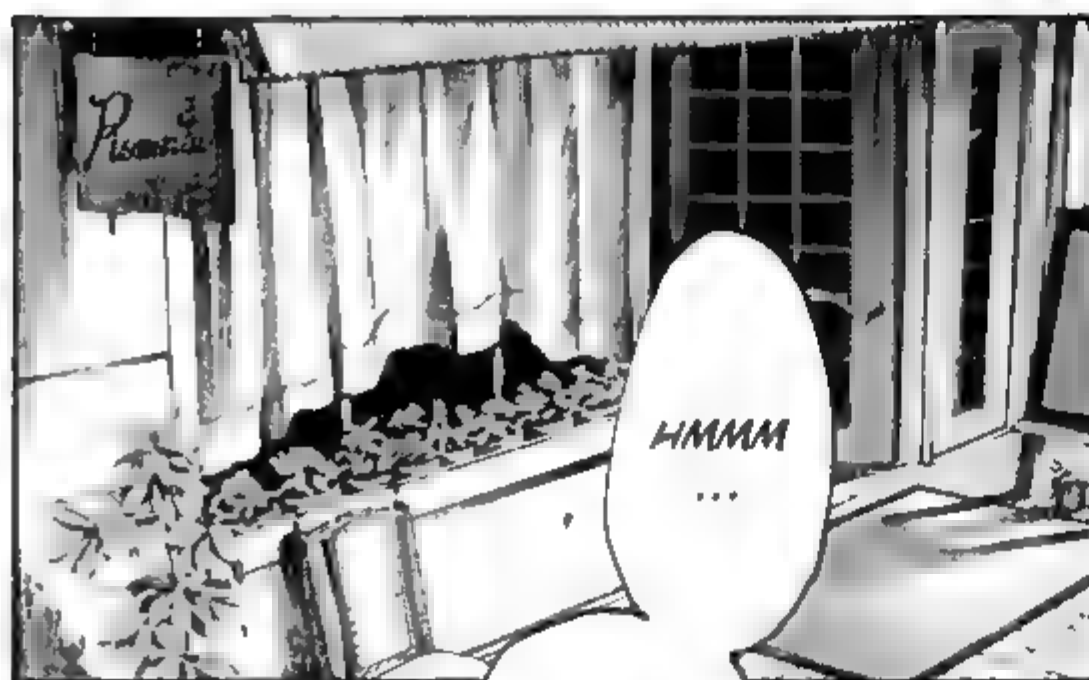


SO
ANYWAY, I
TRIED TO
RUSH BACK,
BUT THE
CHAIN FELL
OFF MY
BIKE...

AND
ACTUALLY
MY MOM IS
OFF WORK
TODAY, SO
SHE WAS
HOME...

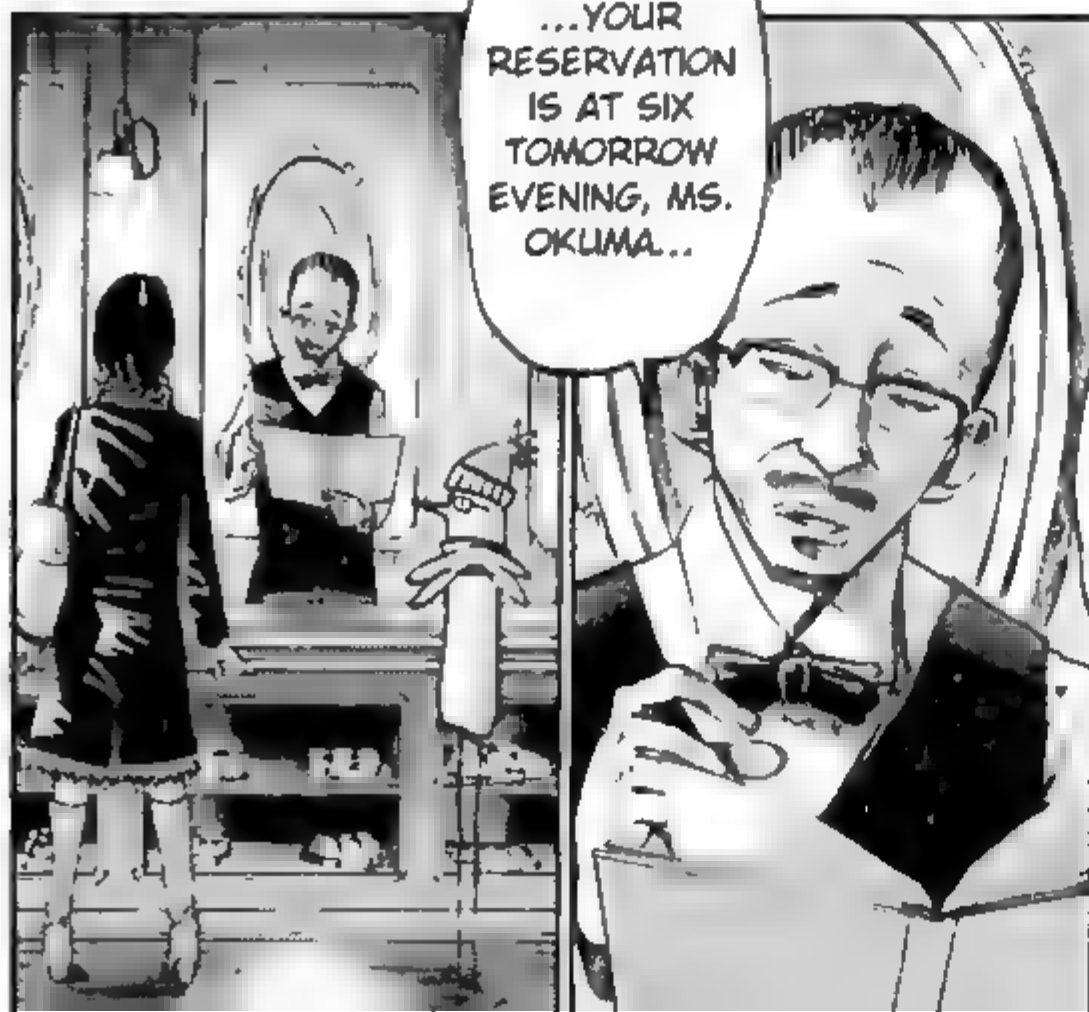
BUT WE
SWITCHED TO
AN ELECTRIC
ONE LAST
MONTH, SO
IF I'D JUST
THOUGHT
ABOUT IT FOR
A SECOND...

NO,
NO, NO,
REALLY
DON'T
WORRY
ABOUT
IT.



HMMM
...

B-
BUT...



...YOUR
RESERVATION
IS AT SIX
TOMORROW
EVENING, MS.
OKUMA...

I GOT US A
RESERVATION
AT A REALLY
NICE PLACE
FOR DINNER!





PHEW...

TONIGHT
HAS BEEN
CHAOTIC
FROM THE
GET-GO.



YES,
CUNNI—

YES,
THAT'S
ALL!



I'M
SORRY
I GOT IT
WET.

OH
BEFORE
I
FORGET,
HERE...



THANK
YOU FOR
WAITING!



OH.

I
GET IT



NO,
THAT
ISN'T
WHY...

WELL, OF
COURSE
THAT'S
PART OF
IT, BUT...

I WAS
WONDERING
WHY YOU'D
ASK AN OLD
MAN OUT
FOR DINNER,
BUT IT WAS
TO RETURN
THIS...

YOU'RE
VERY
CONSCI-
ENTIOUS.

MIDORI OKUMA,
25 YEARS OLD.
A LOCAL BORN
AND BRED, SHE
CURRENTLY
LIVES WITH HER
PARENTS.

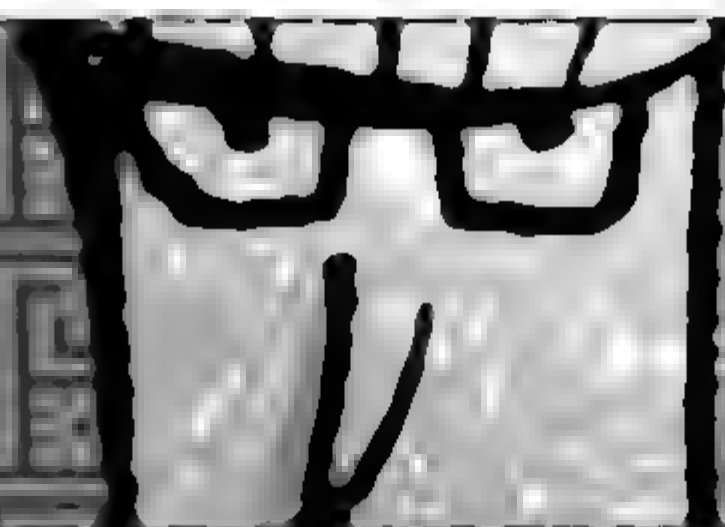


SHE WAS
THE ONE
WHO COULD
USE THE
FEELING OF
HAPPINESS.

I
REMEMBER
HER WELL
SINCE SHE
WAS MY
SISTER'S
MOTHER.



THE
FATHER OF
THE LITTLE
GIRL
HAD
DIED
FROM
A
DISEASE.



SHE'S
BASICALLY
A KIND AND
HELPFUL
PERSON.

...BUT AS
I RECALL,
MY SISTER
REALLY
TOOK TO
HER.



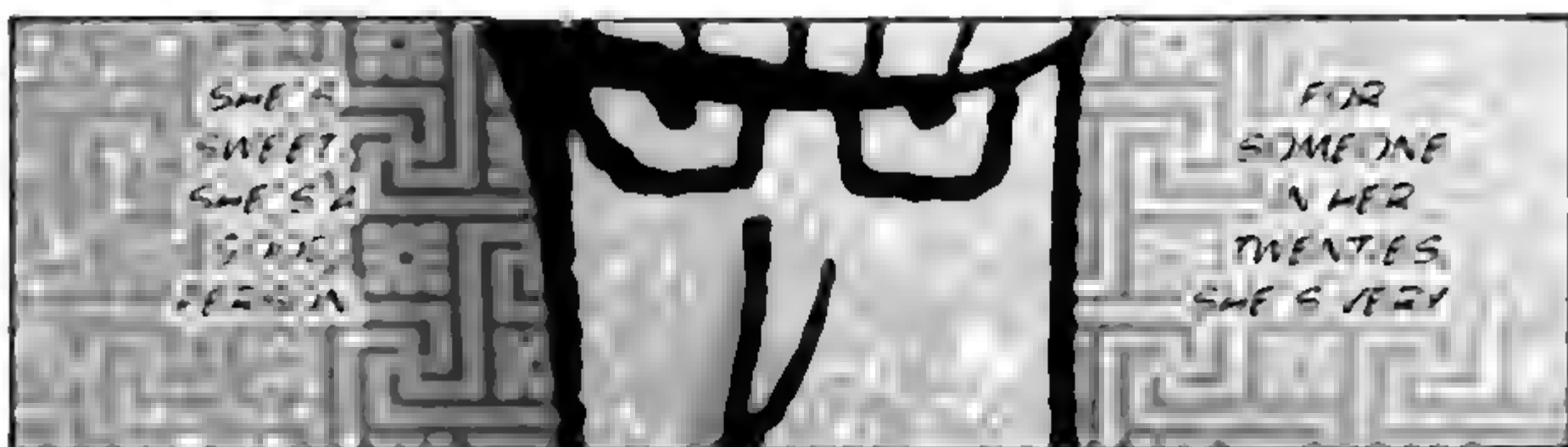
THE
LITTLE
GIRL
HAD
DIED
FROM
A
DISEASE.



BUT
SHE'S A
LITTLE
WORRIED
ABOUT HER
UNCERTAIN
FUTURE.

HER HIGH
SCHOOL DREAM
WAS TO OWN A
COFFEE SHOP
AND SO SHE
STARTED
WORKING PART-
TIME AT THE

SHE PUT
LAST YEAR
BEHIND
TAKING
OTHER
THINGS. THE
WORKING
HOURS
WERE LONG

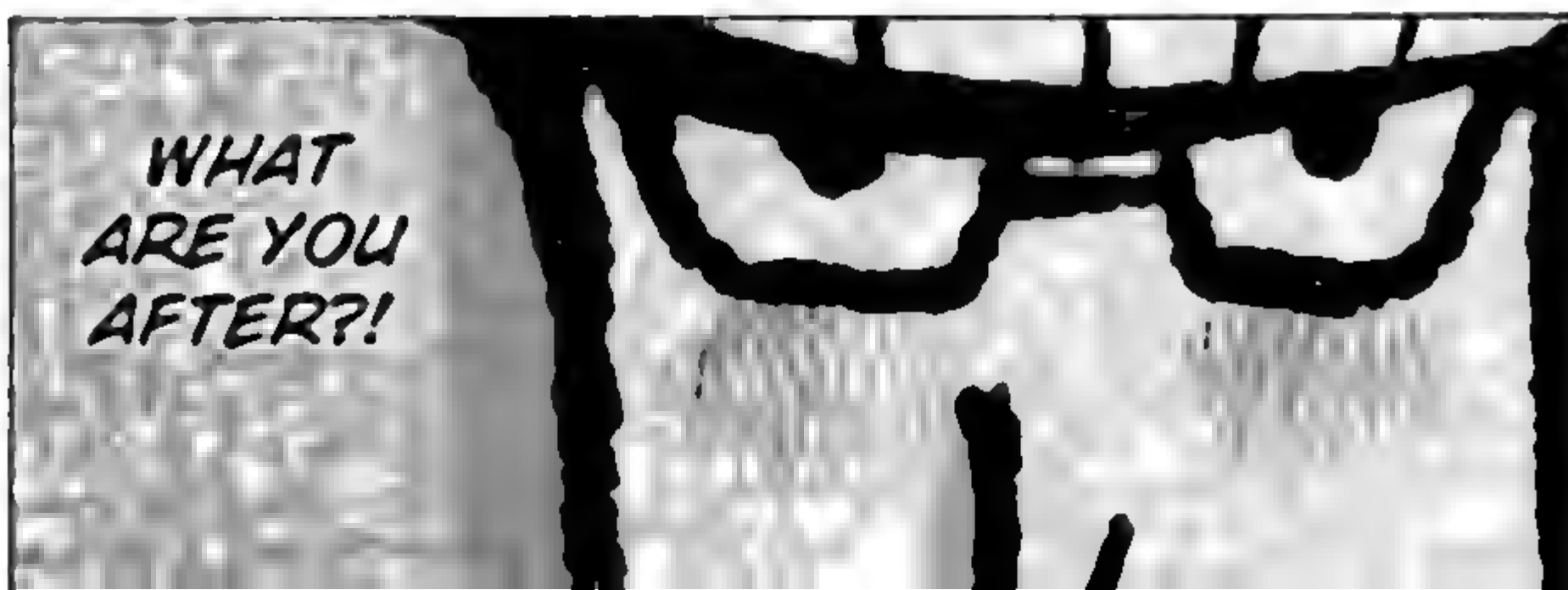


SHE'S
SWEET,
SHE'S A
GOOD
PERSON

FOR
SOMEONE
IN HER
TWENTIES,
SHE'S VERY



A
SMILE.



WHAT
ARE YOU
AFTER?!



OH,
SORRY
ABOUT
THAT.

I'M THE
ONLY ONE
SINGING.
DON'T
YOU LIKE
KARAOKE,
YUICHI?

UHHH
...



682

78

RESERVED



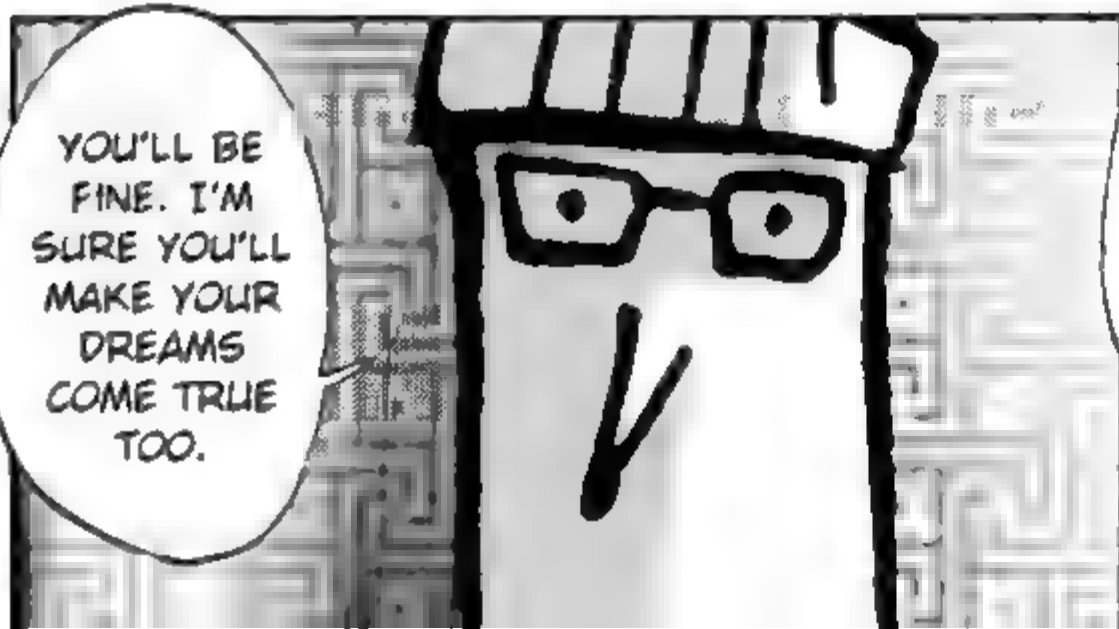
THAT'S
AMAZING...
I NEED TO
BECOME
A REAL
ADULT...

WELL,
AFTER
LIVING WITH
THEM FOR
TWO YEARS,
I'VE GROWN
TO LOVE
THEM LIKE
FAMILY.

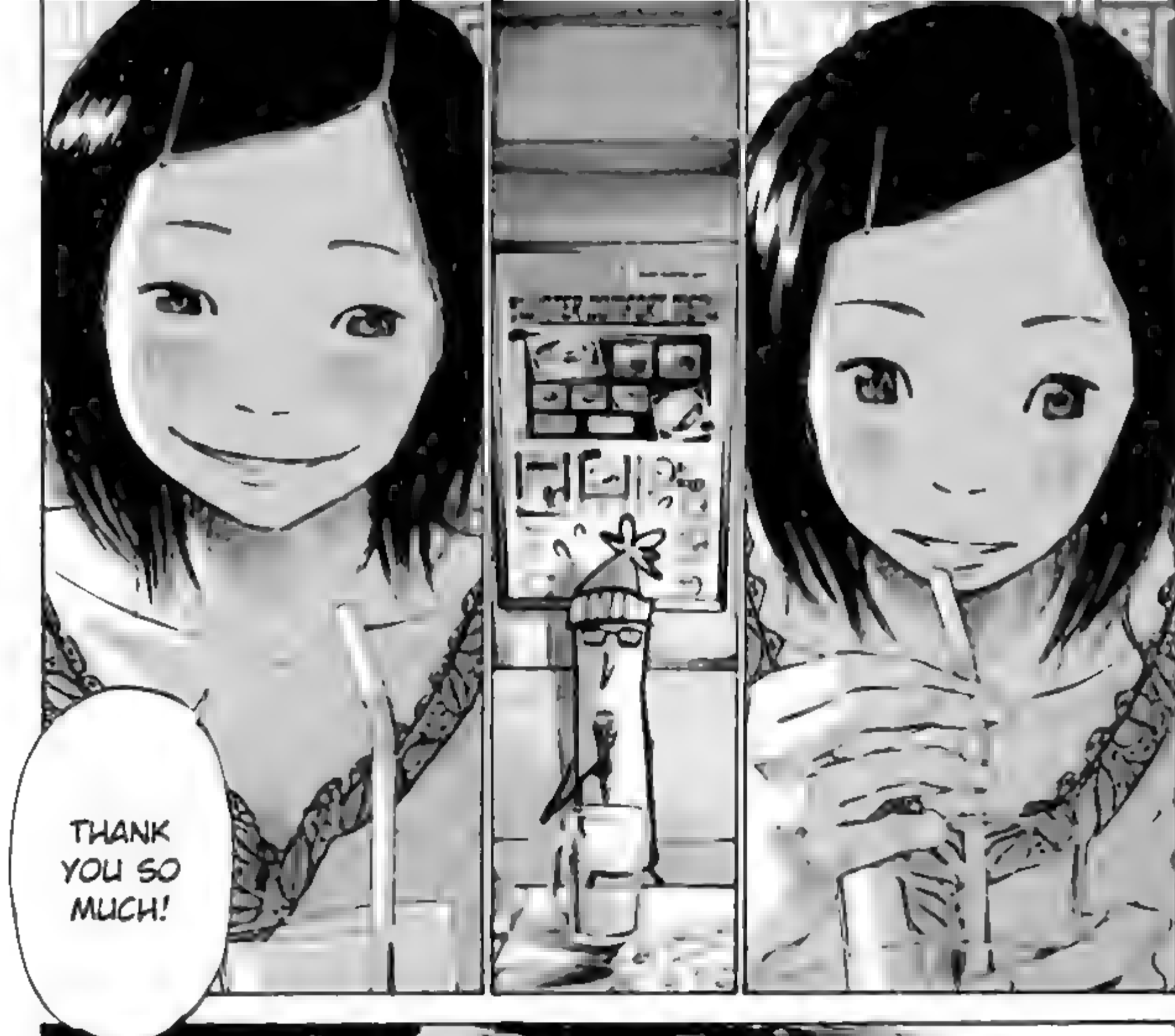


YOU'RE
REALLY
SWEET,
YUICHI.

LOOKING
AFTER YOUR
SISTER AND
NEPHEW
LIKE THAT.



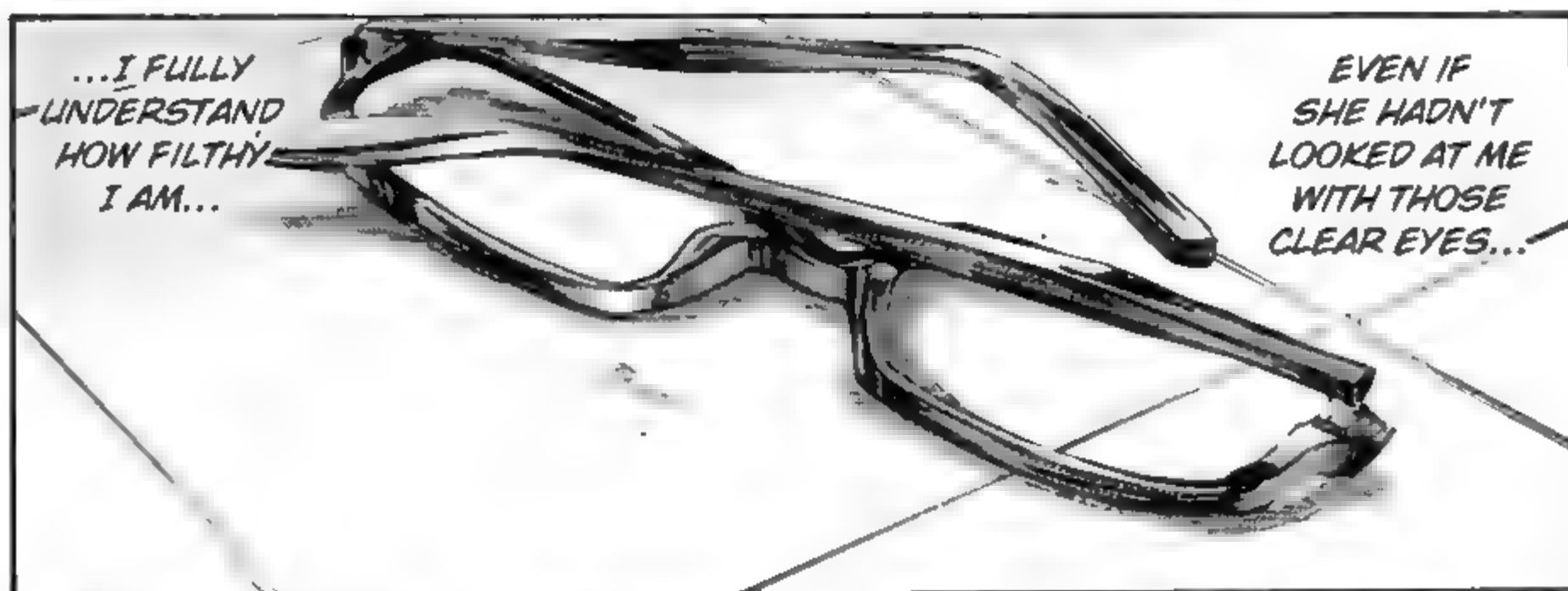
YOU'LL BE
FINE. I'M
SURE YOU'LL
MAKE YOUR
DREAMS
COME TRUE
TOO.





...LIKE
THAT...

DON'T
LOOK
AT
ME...



...I FULLY
UNDERSTAND
HOW FILTHY
I AM...

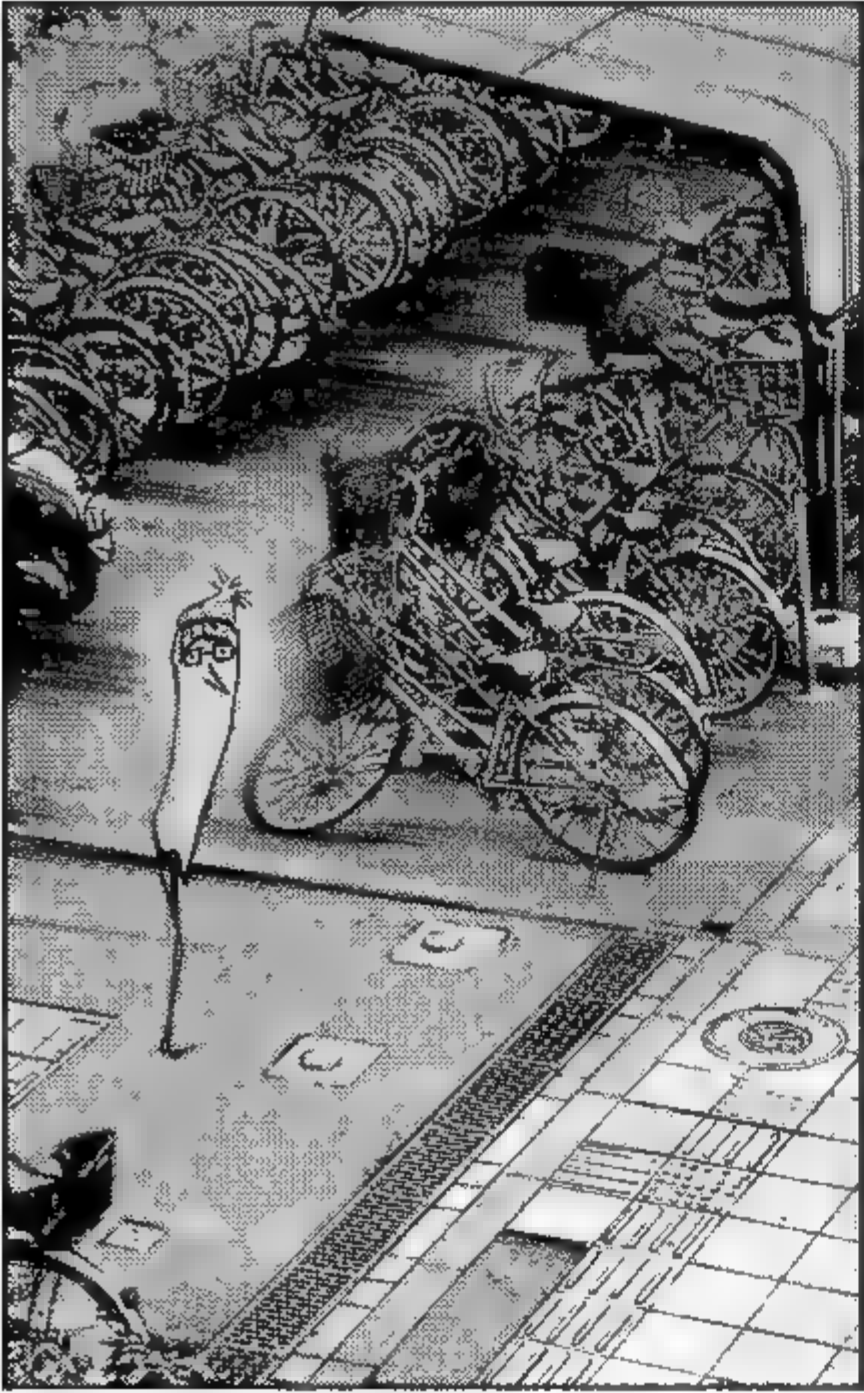
EVEN IF
SHE HADN'T
LOOKED AT ME
WITH THOSE
CLEAR EYES...

DON'T
FORGET
THAT
ANGLISH!

WHAT'S THE
MEANING OF
SUPERFICIAL
KINDNESS?

I'M
SICKENED
BY MY OWN
PUERILITY.

I
NEED
TO GO.





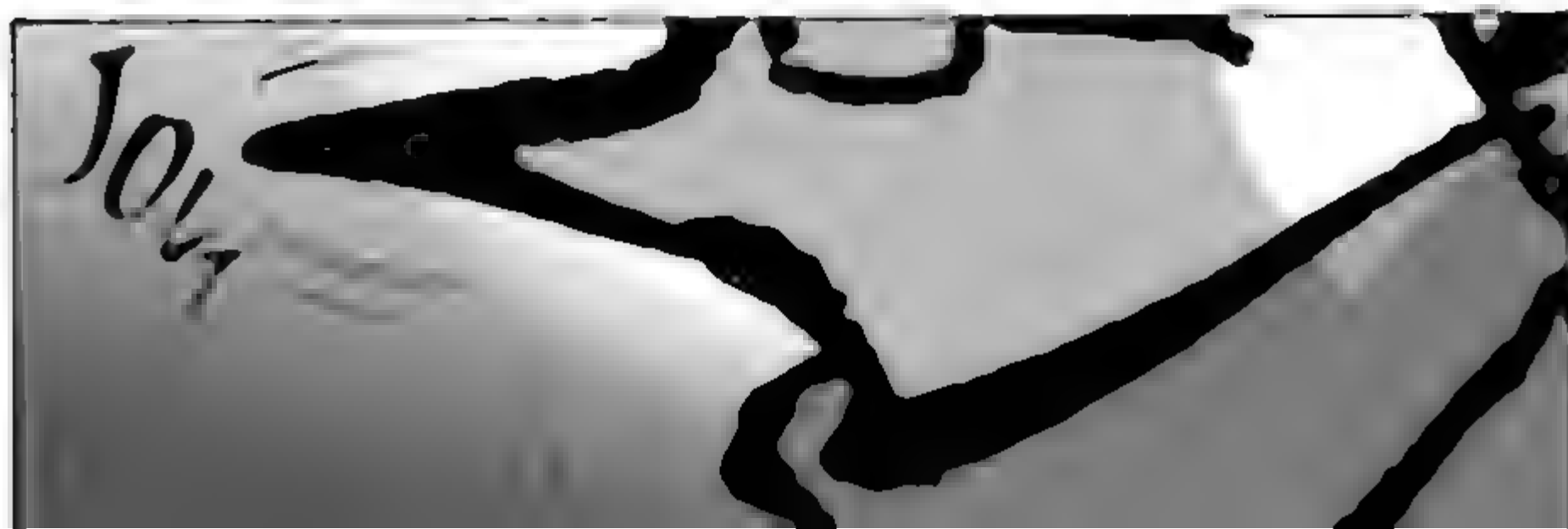
☆

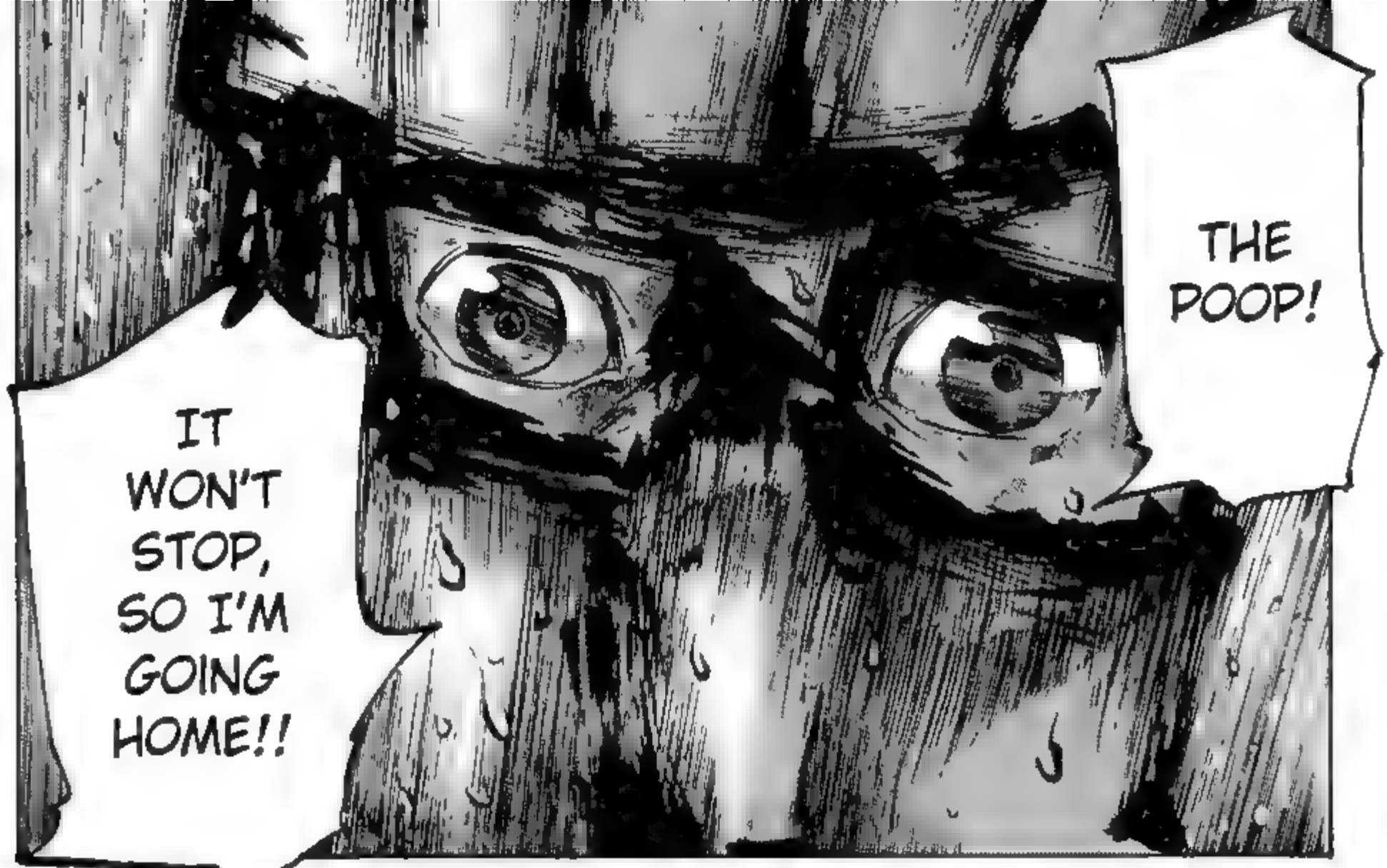
☆☆

Chapter

32

☆





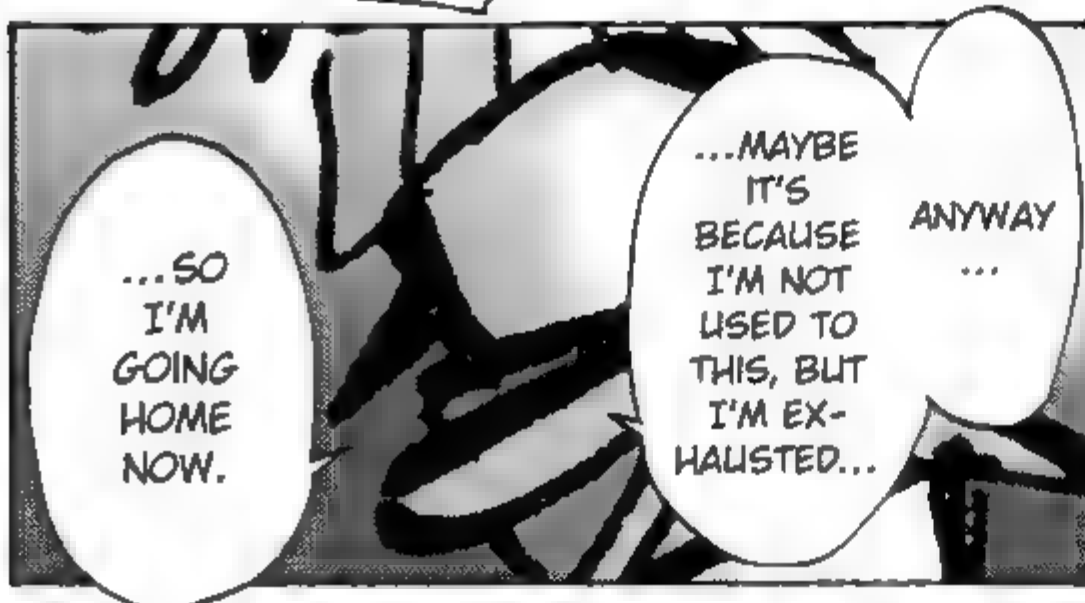
IT
WON'T
STOP,
SO I'M
GOING
HOME!!

THE
POOP!



WHAT
ARE YOU
TALKING
ABOUT?!

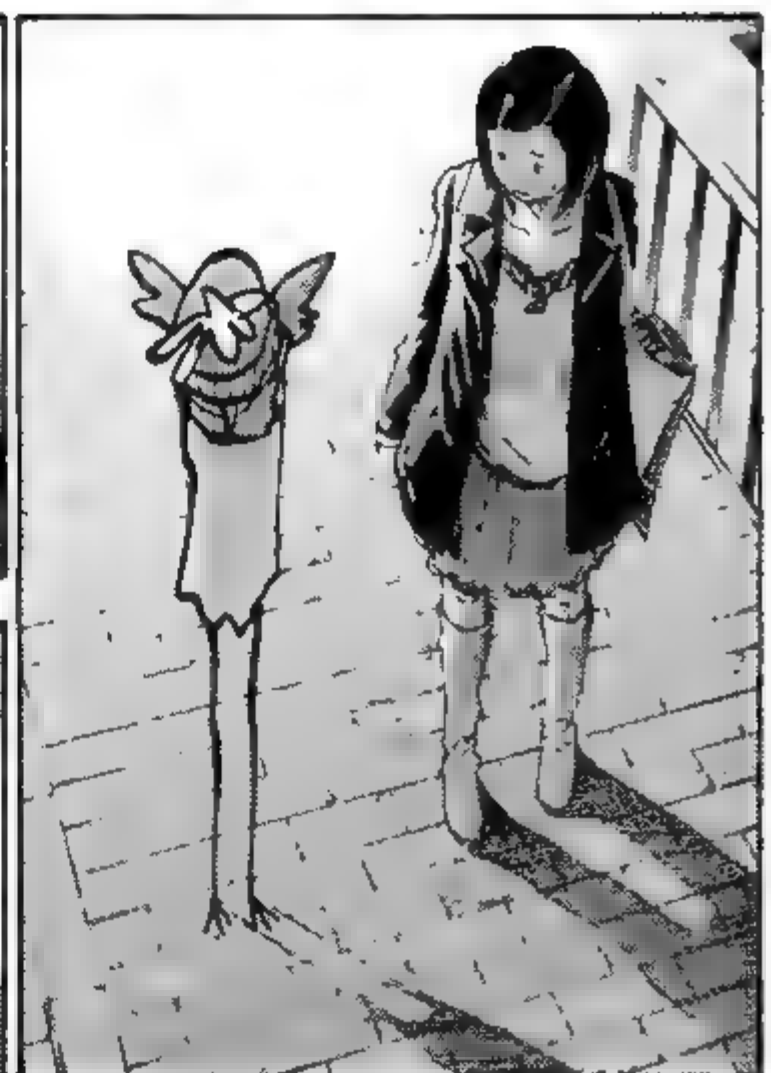
WHAT
...?



...SO
I'M
GOING
HOME
NOW.

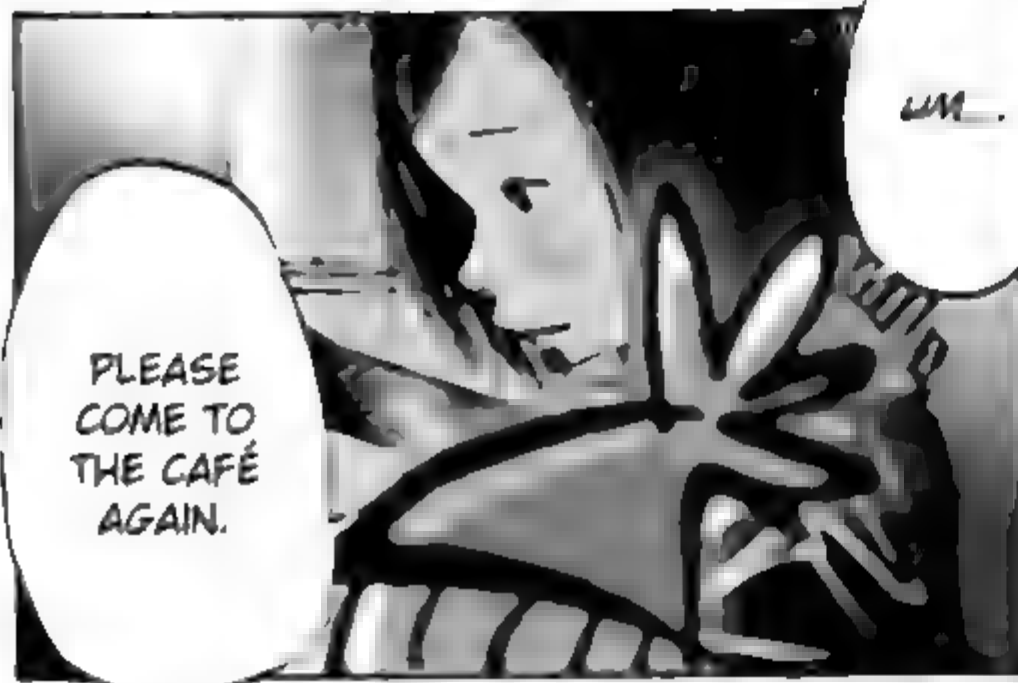
...MAYBE
IT'S
BECAUSE
I'M NOT
USED TO
THIS, BUT
I'M EX-
HAUSTED...

ANYWAY
...

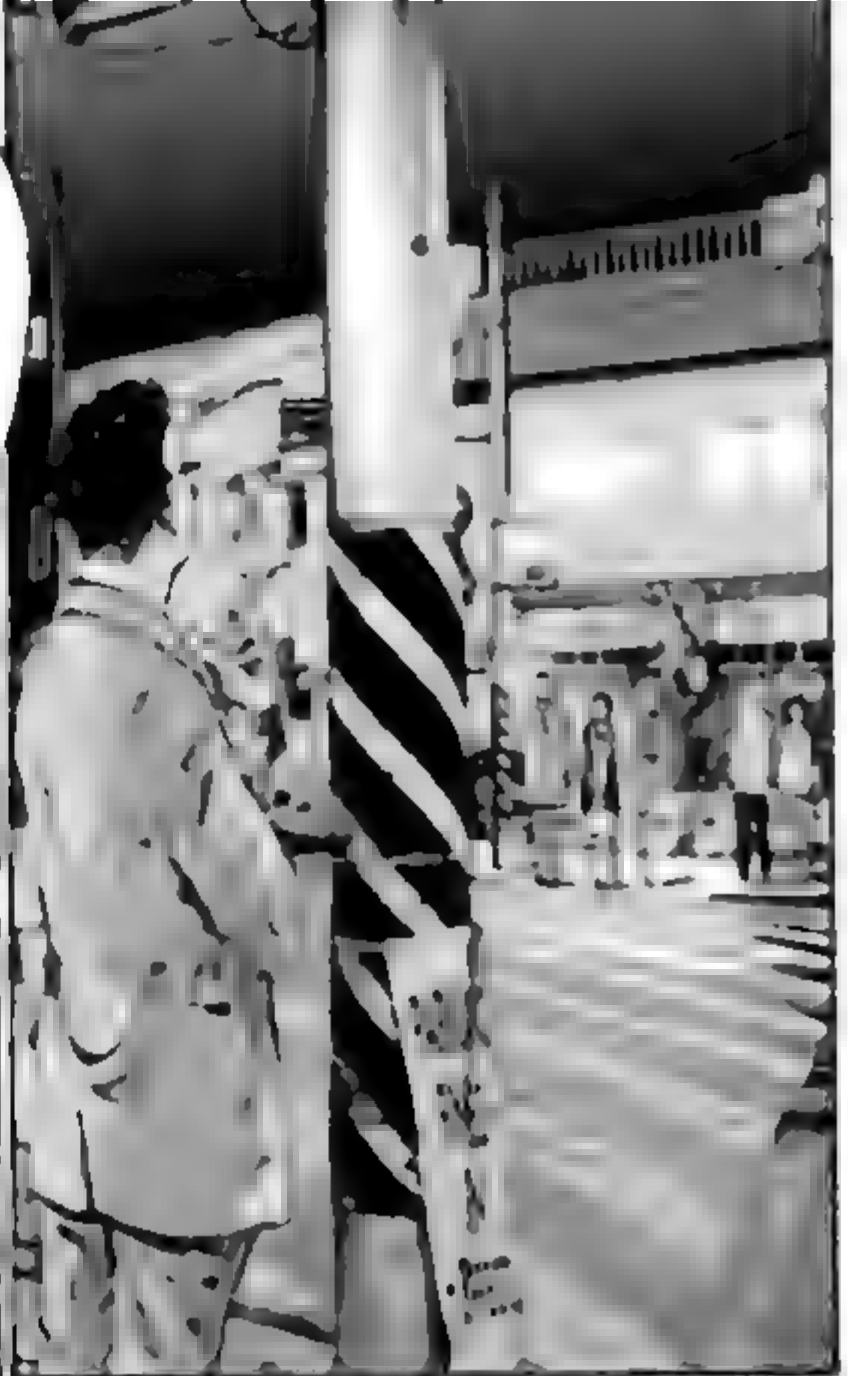


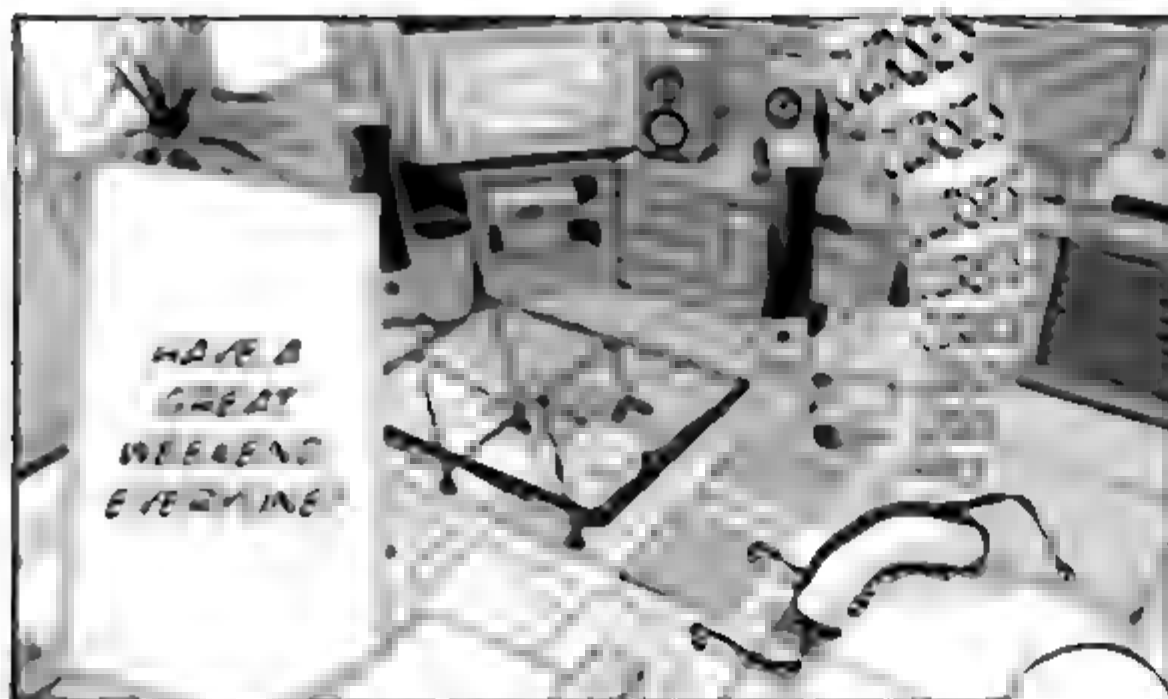
...I
UNDER-
STAND...

OH...



um...





HAVE A
GREAT
WEEKEND
EVERYONE!



AT THE
WEEKEND
PREFECT
FOR THE
LAND
REIN

AN
EXTREME
COLD FRONT
IS COMING
IN FROM
THE SEA OF
JAPAN, AND
SNOW IS
PREDICTED IN
THE INLAND
AREAS.



HEEEY!
YUUKI!

IT
LOOKS LIKE
IT'S GOING
TO SNOW
TOMORROW!
WILL YOU
GO DO THE
SHOPPING?

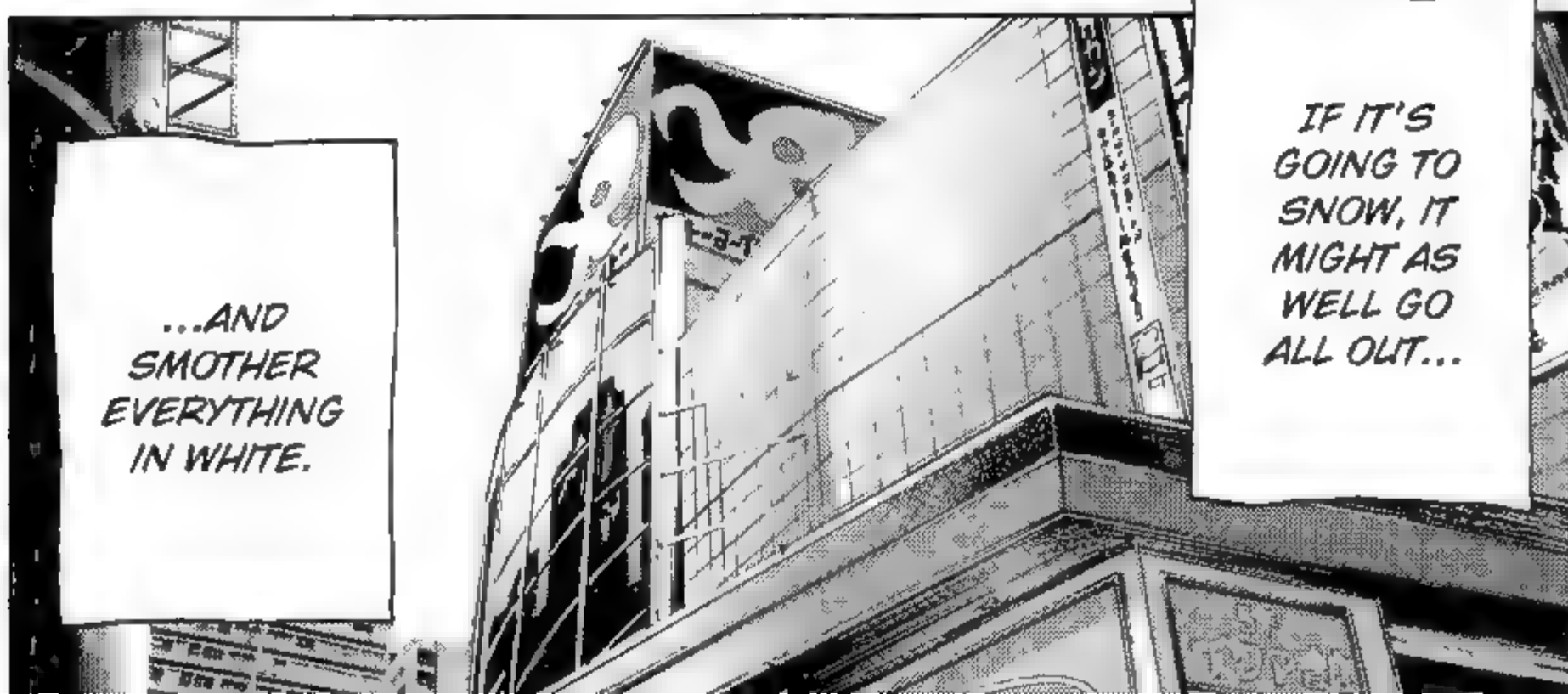


...ABLE
TO DO
ANYTHING
THE LAST
COUPLE
OF
DAYS...

SO I
BASIC-
ALLY
HAVEN'T
BEEN...

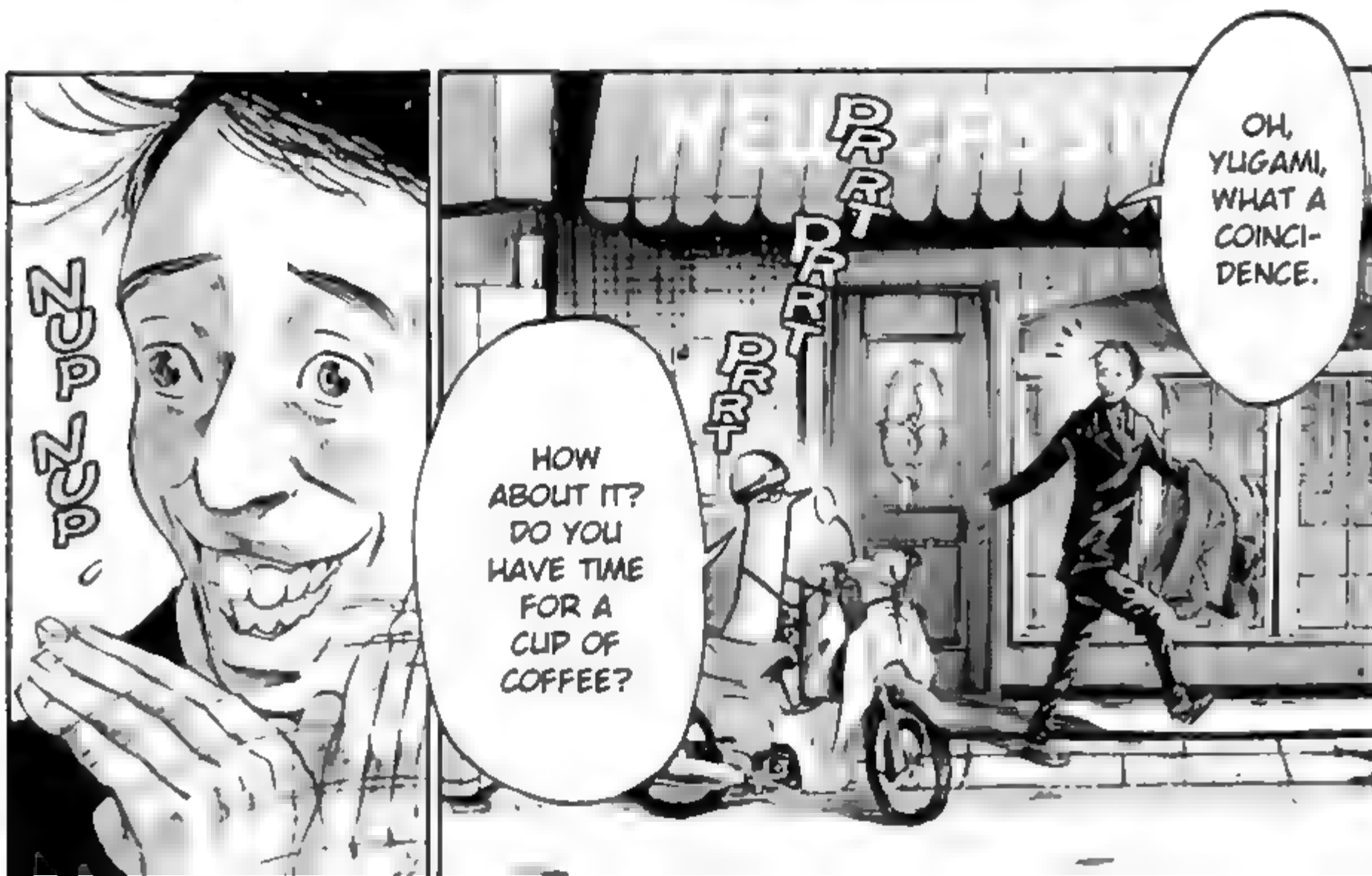


SNOW...



...AND
SMOTHER
EVERYTHING
IN WHITE.

IF IT'S
GOING TO
SNOW, IT
MIGHT AS
WELL GO
ALL OUT...





SORRY!
WE'RE
CLOSED...



IT'S NOT
GOOD FOR
YOU TO
WORK TOO
HARD.

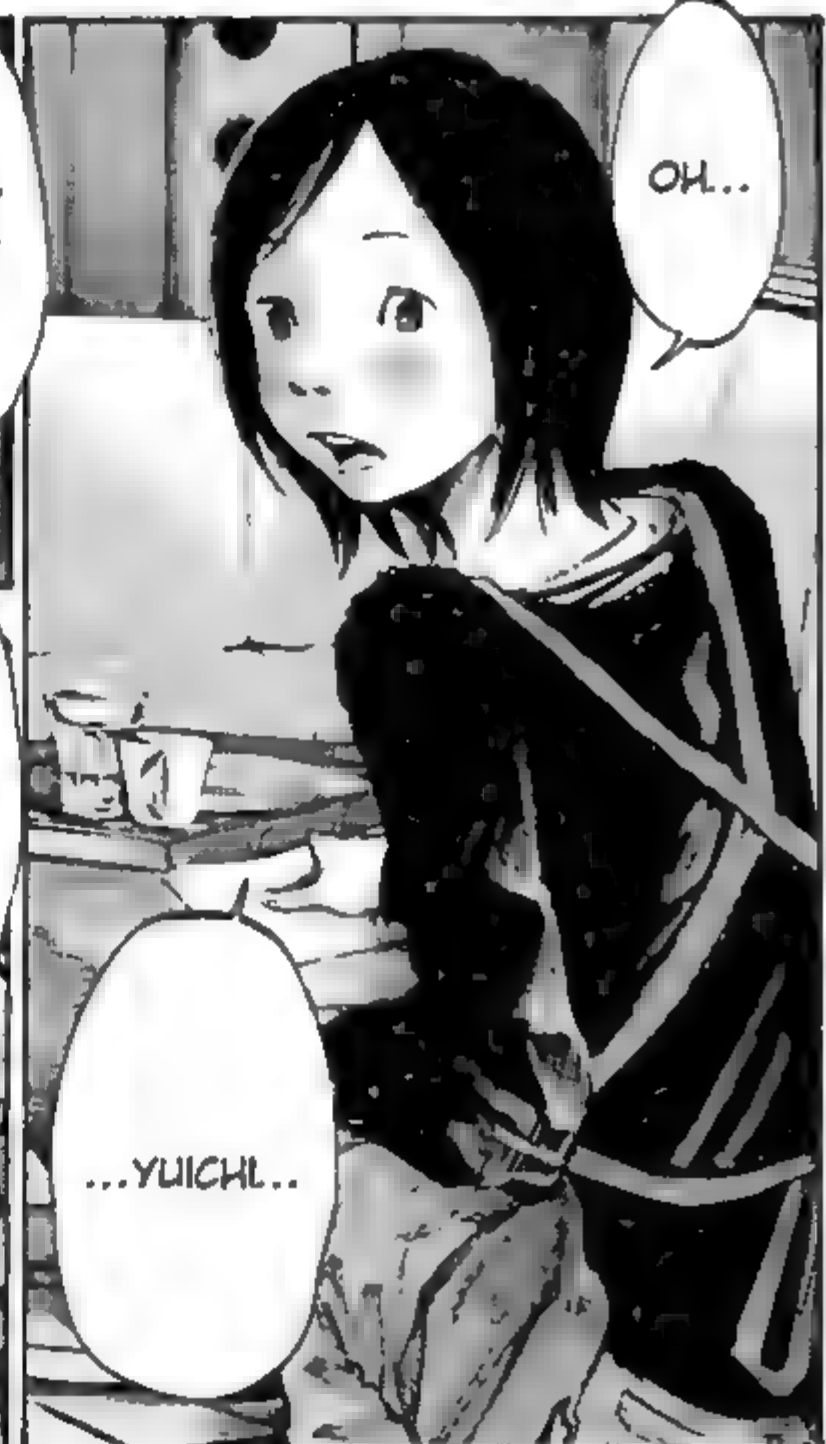


AGAIN?
YOU'RE A
STRANGE
ONE.



I'LL
COME
BACK
ANOTHER
TIME.

OH...
SORRY
ABOUT
THAT...



OH...

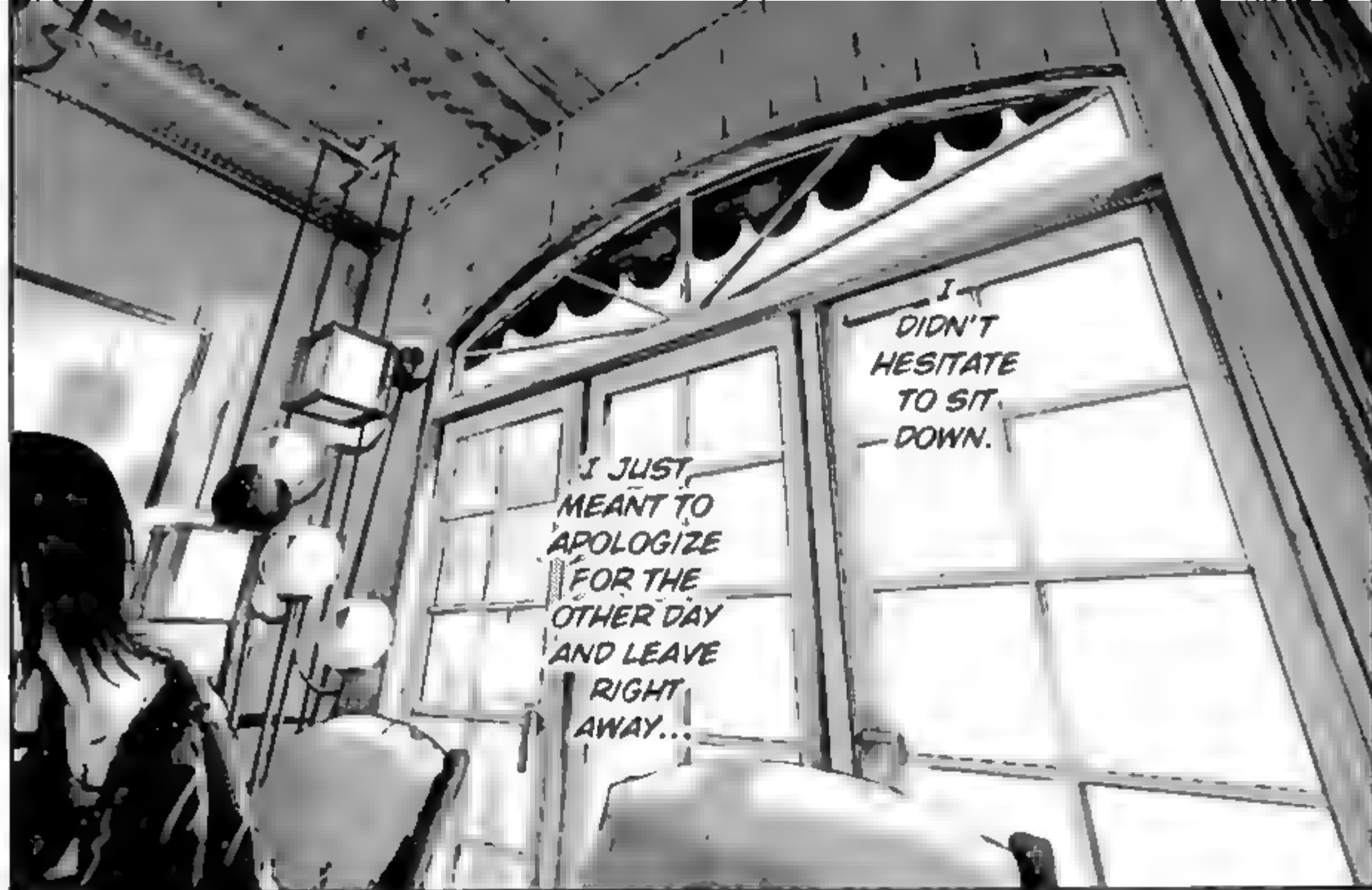


PLEASE-
PLEASE
MAKE
YOUR-
SELF AT
HOME...

OH...
NOT AT
ALL! IT'S
TOTALLY
FINE!

MY
MANAGER
HAD AN
EMERGENCY
AND HAD
TO LEAVE,
SO I'M
CLOSING
UP.

...YUICHI...



I JUST
MEANT TO
APOLOGIZE
FOR THE
OTHER DAY
AND LEAVE
RIGHT
AWAY...

I
DIDN'T
HESITATE
TO SIT
—DOWN.



HOW LONG
HAS IT BEEN
SINCE I'VE
SPENT SUCH
PEACEFUL
TIME WITH A
WOMAN?

...BUT
BEFORE I
REALIZED
IT, DUSK
HAD
FALLEN.



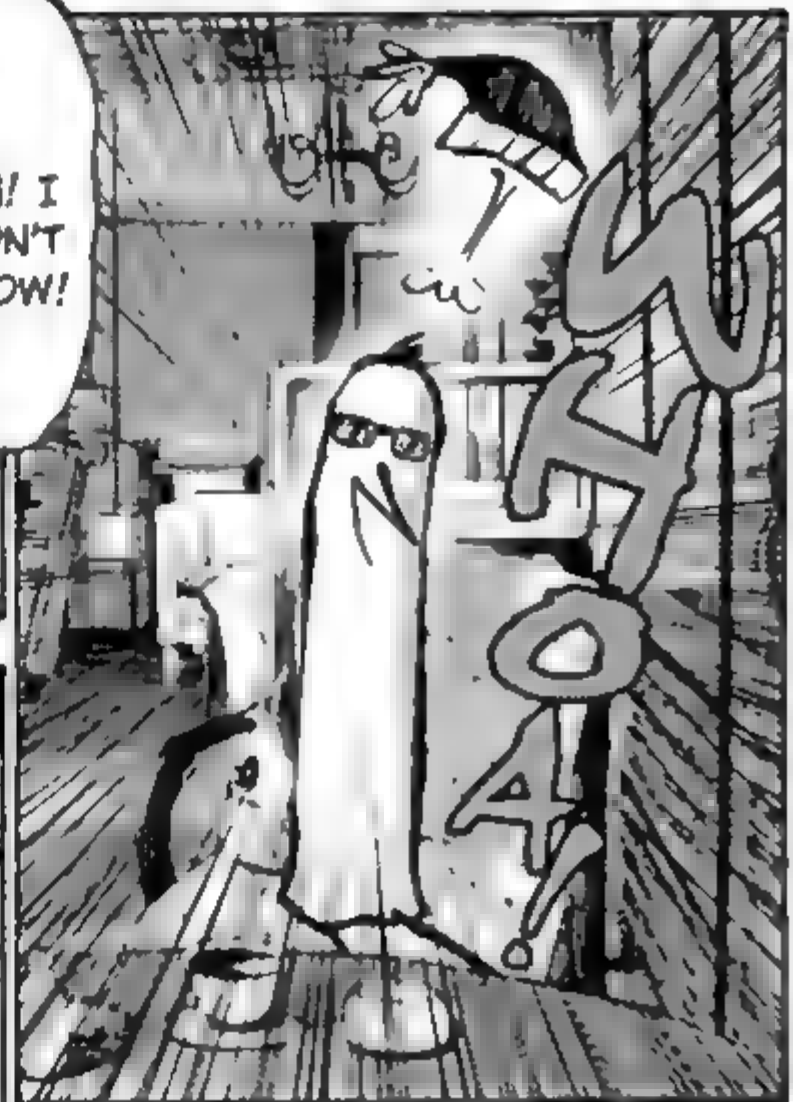
LISTENING
TO HER TALK
PASSIONATELY
ABOUT HER
DREAMS...

"I WANT
TO OPEN A
COZY LITTLE
CAFÉ."

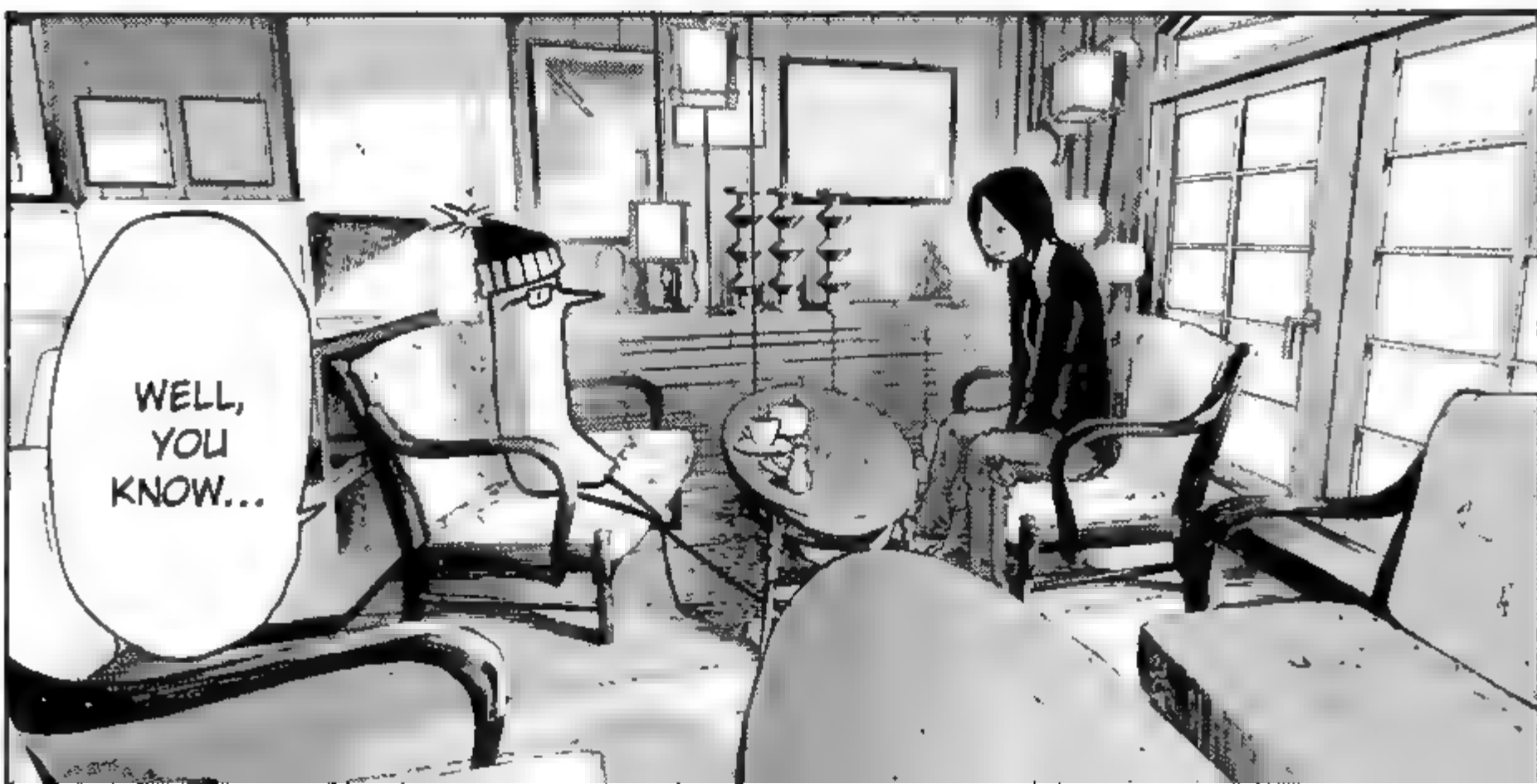


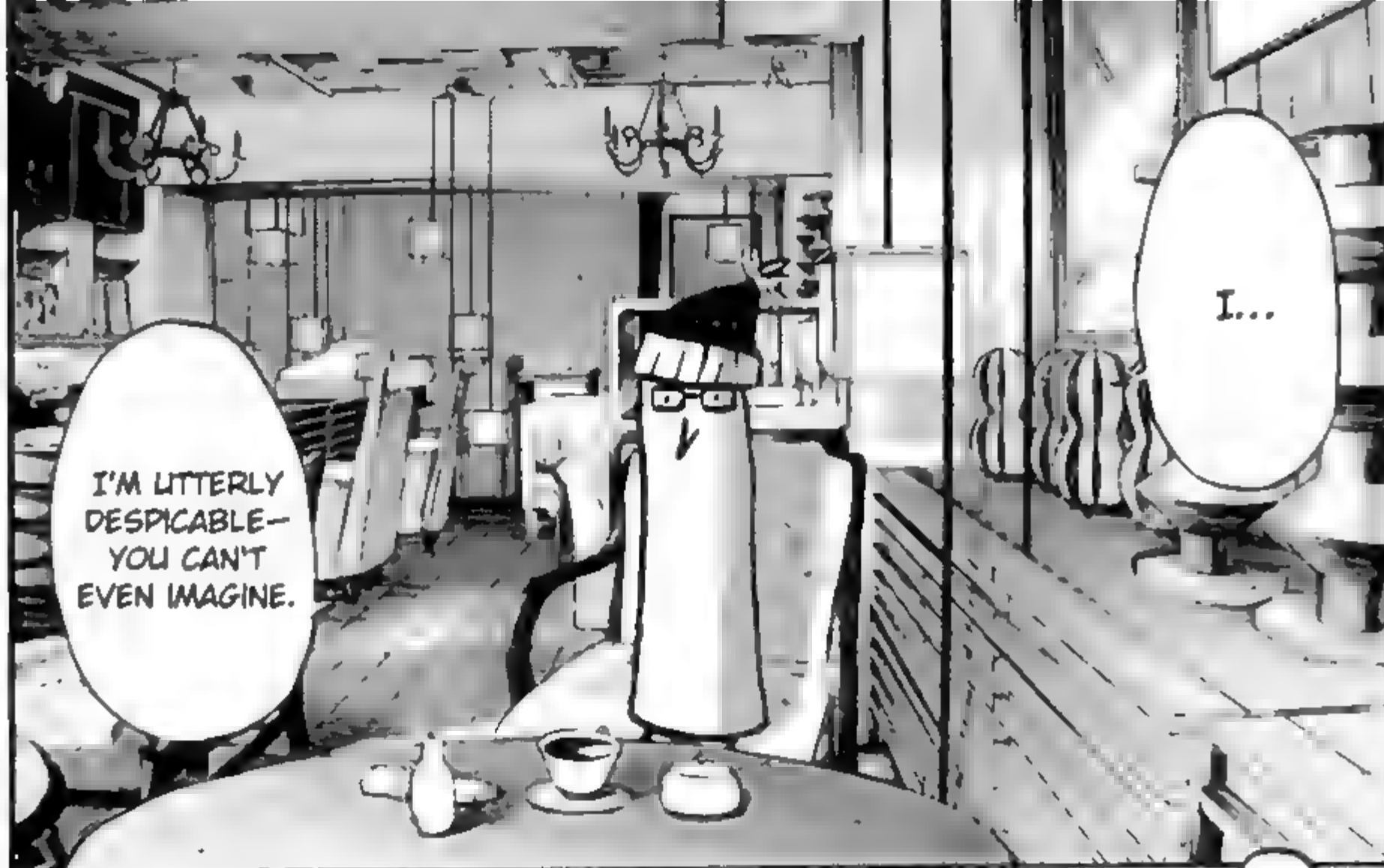
I...











I'M LITTERLY
DESPICABLE--
YOU CAN'T
EVEN IMAGINE.

I...



I THINK
YOU'RE
A GOOD
PERSON,
YUICHI.

YOU LOOK
AFTER YOUR
SISTER...

...SO
RANDOM
...

W-
WHAT
DO YOU
MEAN?
THAT'S
...



CAN
YOU CALL
SOMEONE
WHO'S THAT
SELFISH A
GOOD
PERSON...?

ALL I
WANTED
WAS TO
EXIST
WITHOUT
HAVING
ANYTHING
TO DO WITH
ANYONE
ELSE.

ACTUALLY,
I DON'T
FEEL ANY
EMOTIONAL
BOND TO MY
SISTER'S
FAMILY.



YOU
BOUGHT
THIS BOOK
FOR ME,
RIGHT?!

BUT...!

AS SOMEONE
WHO FELL
THROUGH
SOCIETY'S
CRACKS AND
WAS LIVING LIKE
GARBAGE, THAT
HOUSE WAS JUST
A CONVENIENT
BOX FOR ME TO
STAY IN.



THE
NIGHT
BEFORE
I WENT TO
KARAOKE
WITH
YOU...

...I
MASTURBATED
FOR THE
FIRST TIME IN
FIVE YEARS.



ARE YOU
TRYING TO
MAKE ME
HATE YOU,
YUICHI?!

WHY
WOULD
YOU
TELL ME
THAT?!

W-
WHY
...



ISN'T
THAT
SNEAKY?

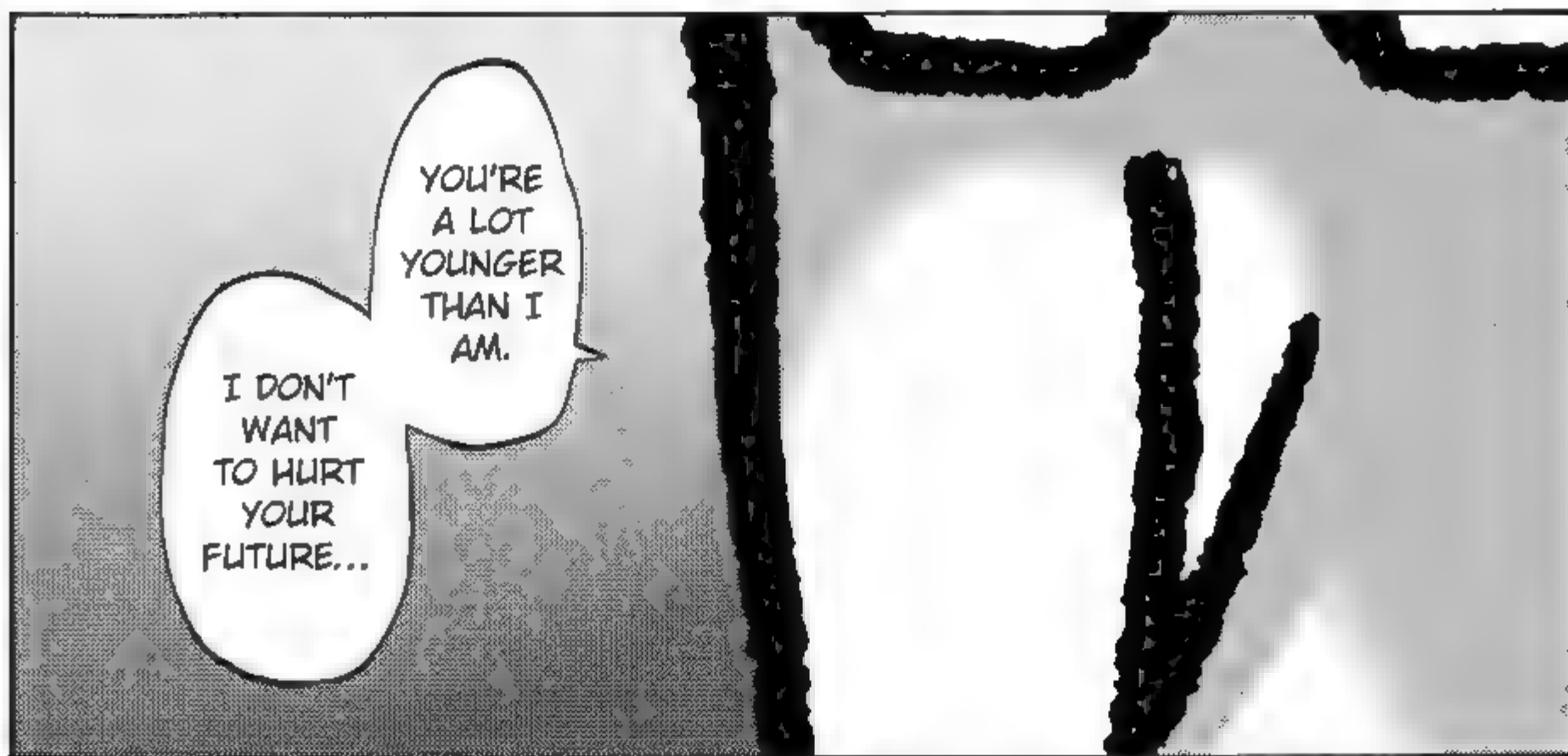
YOU'RE A
SNEAKY
PERSON,
YUICHI...



WHENEVER
I TRY TO
GET CLOSER
TO YOU,
YOU MOVE
FURTHER
AWAY...



YOU
KNOW,
YUICHI...



YOU'RE
A LOT
YOUNGER
THAN I
AM.

I DON'T
WANT
TO HURT
YOUR
FUTURE...



I'M...

...I'M
ALREADY
HURT
RIGHT
NOW...



...WHAT
IS IT? DID
SOMETHING
HAPPEN TO
YOU...?

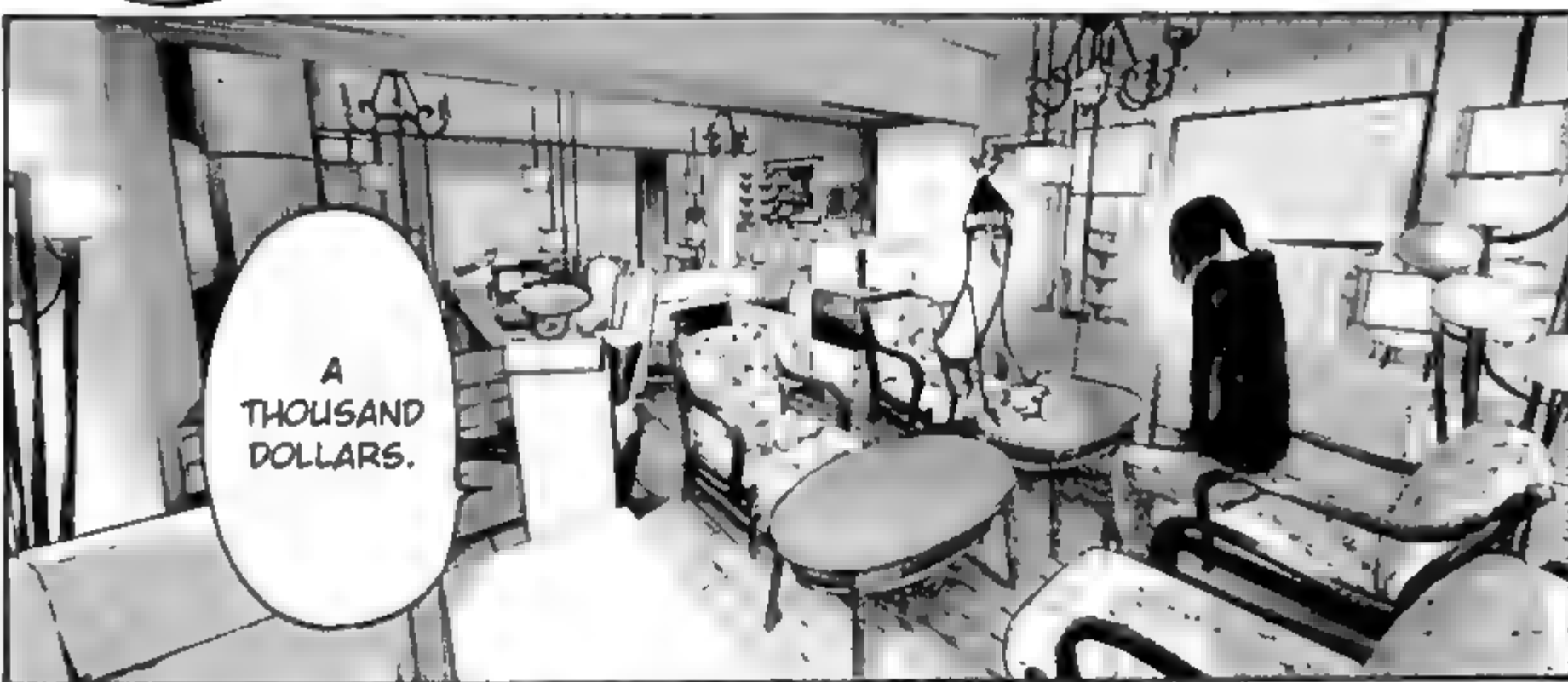
YUICHI...



SORRY
...

...UHM,
HOW
MUCH
IS THE
COFFEE?

I
SHOULD
BE
GOING...

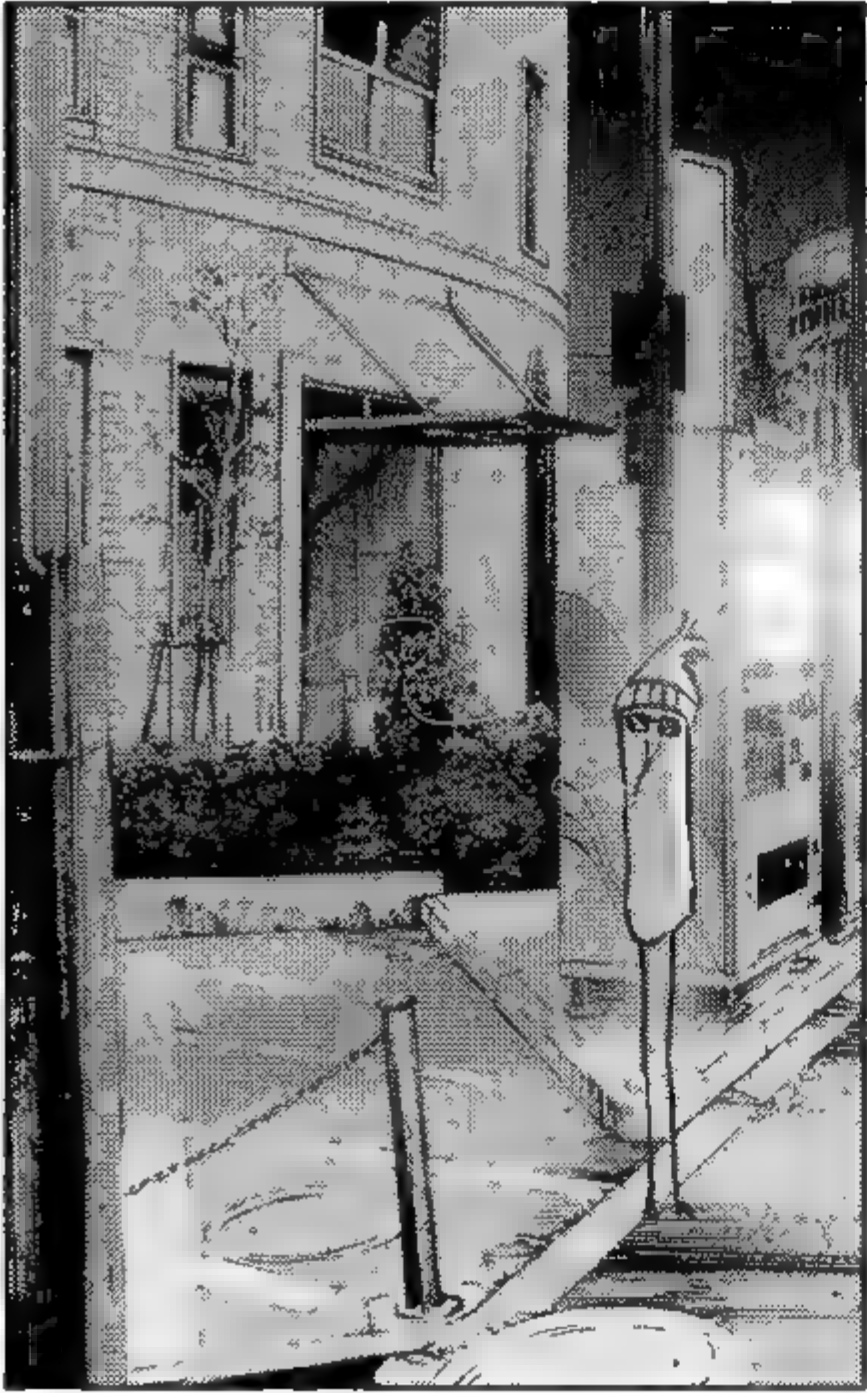


A
THOUSAND
DOLLARS.

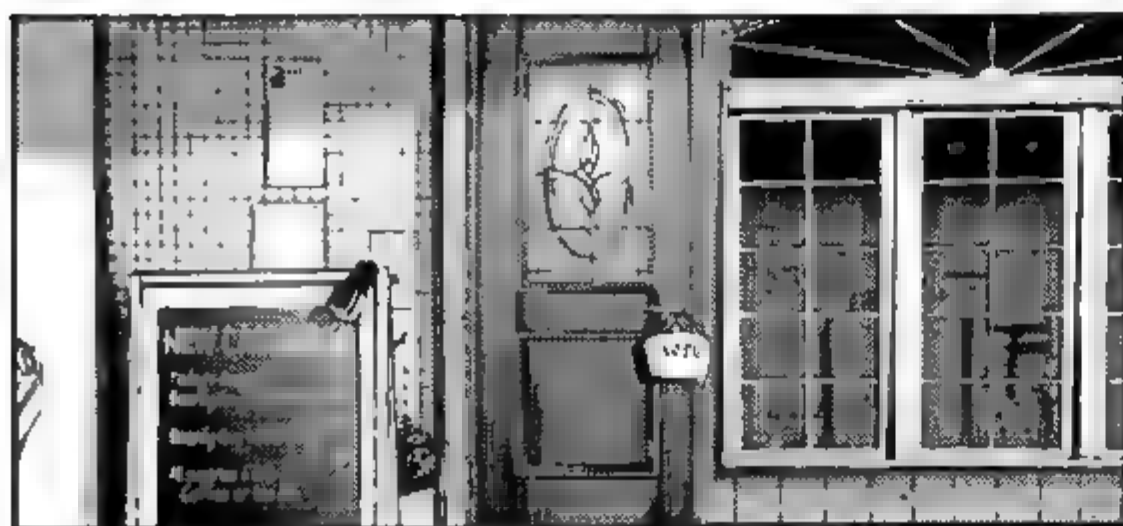
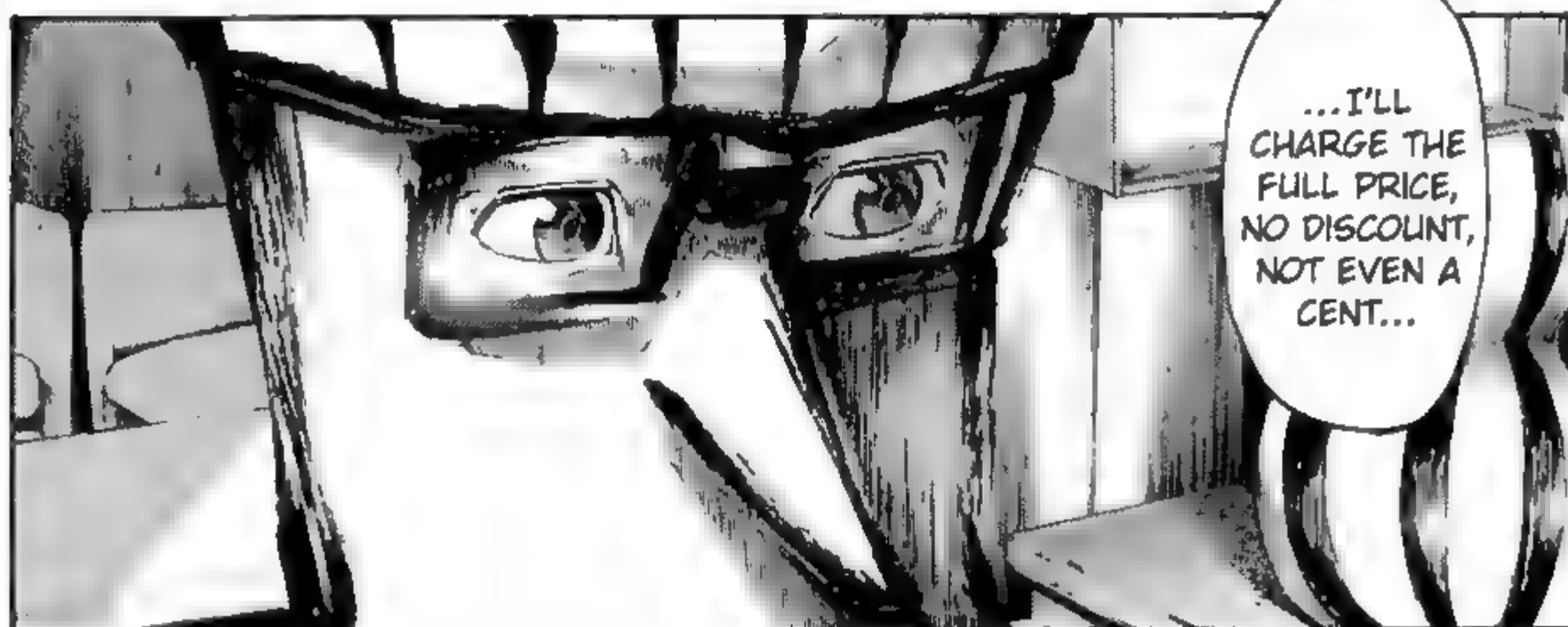


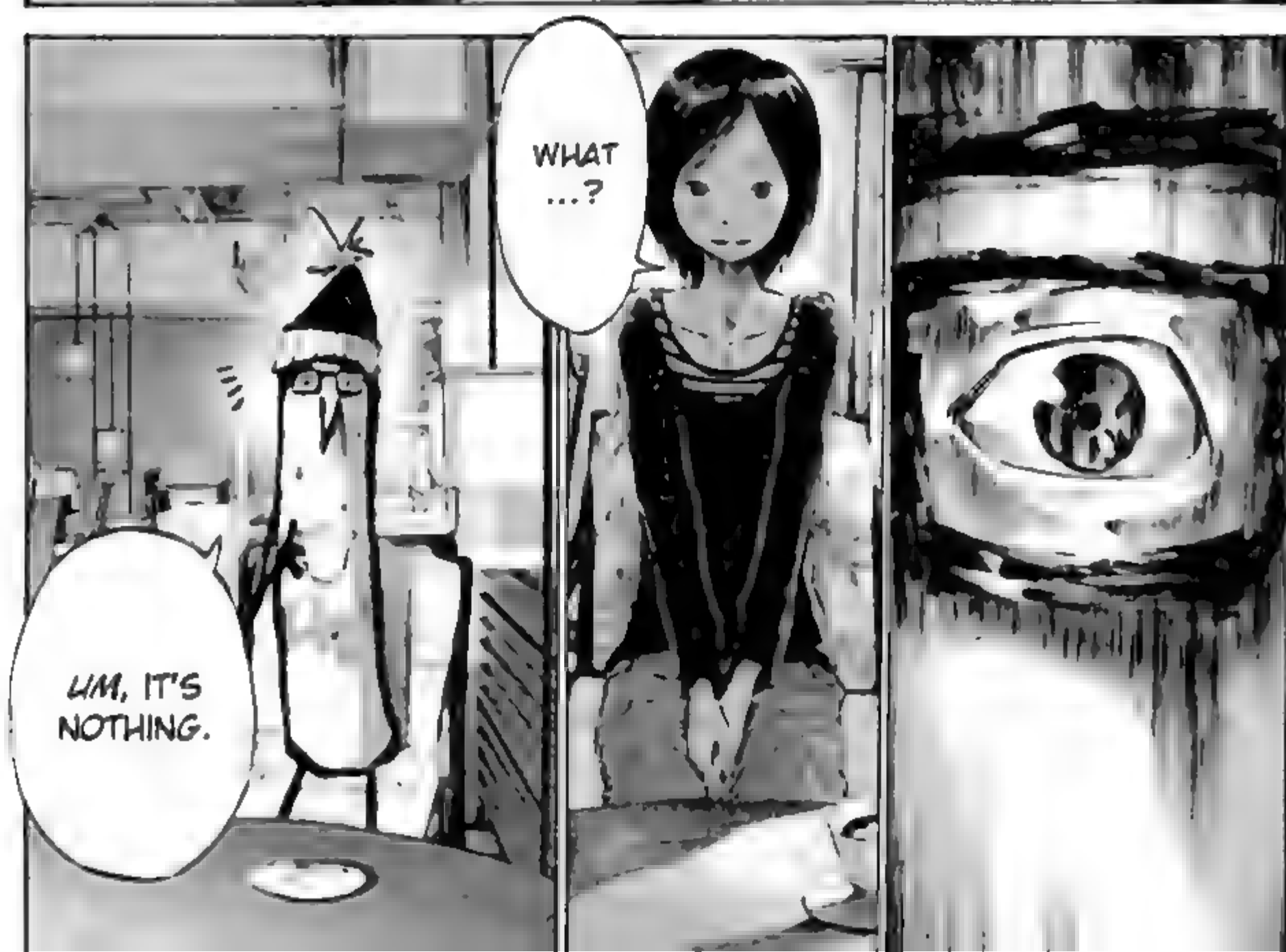
IF YOU
DON'T TELL
ME WHAT
HAPPENED
TO YOU...

...I'LL
CHARGE THE
FULL PRICE,
NO DISCOUNT,
NOT EVEN A
CENT...











THERE'S
NO
HURRY



T
A
R



NOVA
MICA

JUST
TAKE
YOUR
TIME



YOU'RE
THE FIRST
PERSON I'VE
EVER TOLD
THIS TO...

OH MAN,
IT'S BEEN
FIVE
YEARS
ALREADY...

IT WAS
FIVE
YEARS
AGO...



I WAS
LIVING ON
MY OWN
IN AN
APARTMENT
NOT FAR
FROM MY
PARENTS'.



...NO ONE
OF MY
PROFESSORS
FOUND ME A
JOB.

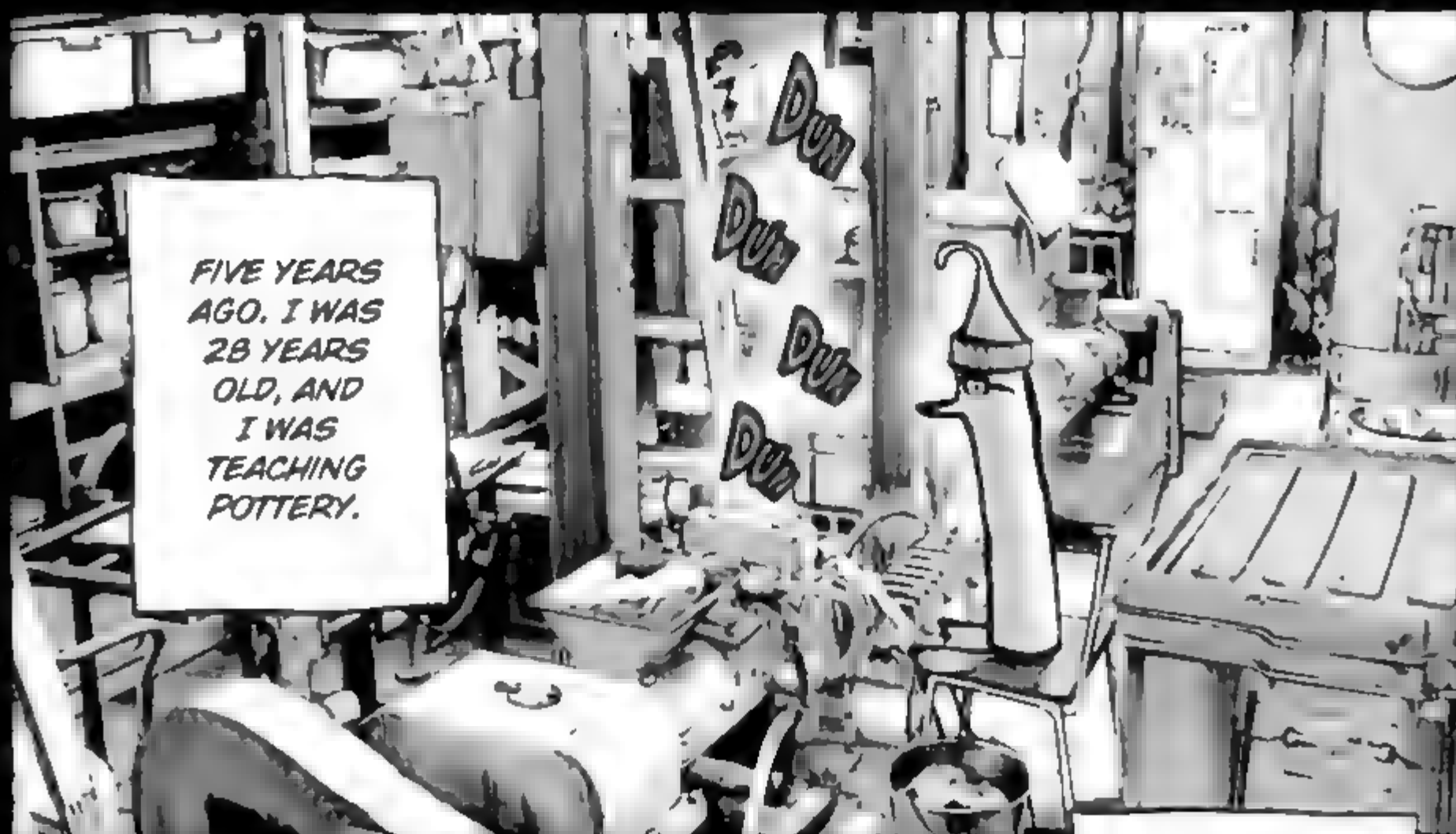
...BUT I STILL
COULDN'T FIGURE
OUT MY PLACE IN
LIFE, AND I WAS
FEELING PRETTY
ISOLATED...

I HAD A
MASTER'S
DEGREE IN
ART...





IT
WAS AT A
POTTERY
SCHOOL
JUST A FEW
MINUTES
FROM THE
TRAIN
STATION.



FIVE YEARS
AGO. I WAS
28 YEARS
OLD, AND
I WAS
TEACHING
POTTERY.



WELL, I WAS
TEACHING A
COMMUNITY
CLASS AIMED
AT THE LOCAL
HOUSEWIVES.



I'LL SEE
YOU NEXT
WEEK.

THANK
YOU FOR
TODAY!



I WAS
VERY
POPULAR
BACK
THEN.

GOOD
JOB,
LADIES.
I'LL SEE
YOU NEXT
WEEK.



OH...
THANK
YOU,
BUT
NO...

WE'RE NOT
ALLOWED
TO ACCEPT
GIFTS FROM
STUDENTS.

UM...MR.
ONODERA.

WOULD
YOU LIKE
SOME
CREAM
PUFFS?
I WAITED
IN LINE
FOREVER
TO GET
THEM!

ESPECIALLY WITH
MRS. YAGI, WHOSE
INTEREST IN ME
WAS STRANGELY
INTENSE.

I PAY
TUITION
JUST LIKE
EVERYONE
ELSE-
DON'T YOU
THINK IT'S
UNFAIR?!

WHO
DOES HE
THINK HE
IS?!

MR.
ONODERA
IS SO
RUDE!

A SCHOOL
THAT RUNS ON
CITY FUNDS LIKE
YOURS, ONE
LITTLE COMPLAINT
TO CITY HALL
AND I COULD
GET YOU
CLOSED
DOWN...

HE'S SO
NICE TO
MRS. KOJIMA,
MRS. OIKE AND
MRS. SUGAWARA,
BUT HE'S SO
COLD TO ME!



I'M
SORRY.

YES,
YES, HA
HA, YES,
THANK
YOU. WE'LL
SEE YOU
NEXT
WEEK...

YES,
MRS. YAGI,
I AM SO
SORRY.
I'LL HAVE
A TALK
WITH HIM.

YUICHI,
I KNOW
YOU'RE
VERY CON-
SCIENTIOUS,
BUT NO
NEED TO
TAKE THIS
SERIOUSLY.

NAAAH,
WE GET
PEOPLE
LIKE THIS
EVERY
ONCE IN
A WHILE.

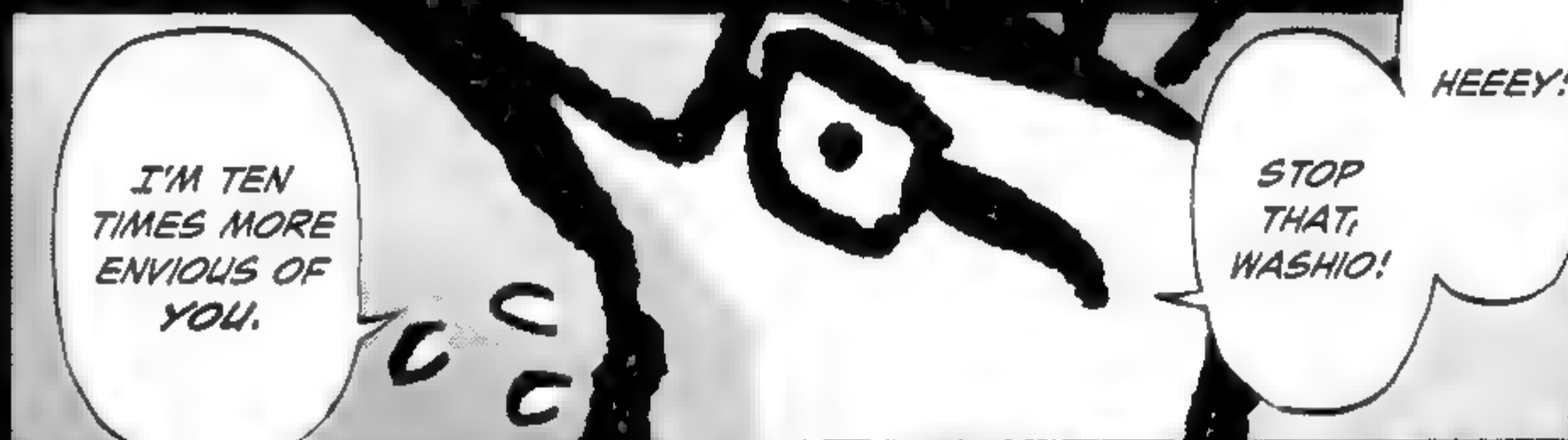
SHE
MIGHT BE
A STUDENT,
BUT SHE'S
ALSO ONLY A
CUSTOMER,
SO JUST
PLAY ALONG.





YOU'RE
SO
POPULAR.

HOW
NICE.



I'M TEN
TIMES MORE
ENVOIOUS OF
YOU.

STOP
THAT,
WASHIO!

HEEEY!



I'M
SURE IN
TIME YOUR
PIECE WILL
GET THE
RECOGNITION IT
DESERVES.

A YOUNG
TALENT LIKE
YOU, IT'S
A SHAME
YOU'RE IN
A SCHOOL
LIKE THIS...

YEAH! YOUR
PIECE, THAT
CELADON
POT, I
HEAR IT'S
GOING TO
BE IN A
MAGAZINE.



THAT
THING...



SO I THINK
ETERNAL
BEAUTY LIES
IN SOME-
THING EVER
CHANGING...

BESIDES,
MAN
DECIDES THE
CRITERIA
FOR BEAUTY
AFTER THE
FACT.

THAT'S
JUST A
THING.

LIKE
LIFE, FOR
INSTANCE.



I
THINK IT'S
PLENTY
IMPRES-
SIVE.

...WHEN
IT WAS
FIRING
IN THE
KILN?

DON'T
YOU THINK
THAT POT
WAS AT
ITS MOST
BEAUTI-
FUL...



...THE
DELICATE
CURVES...

THE FULL,
ABUNDANT
SHAPE...

I WANTED
TO CREATE
SOMETHING
LIKE THAT
SOMEDAY
TOO!

YUI!

YUI, ARE
YOU IN
THERE?!

YOU'RE
WORK-
ING ON
ANOTHER
MODEL?

KA
KCHAK

I'M
MISSING
A PIECE.

YOU
COULD'VE
UNLOCKED
THE DOOR
FOR ME.

OH,
YOU'RE
HOME.



I WAS
DATING A
WOMAN I
KNEW FROM
UNIVERSITY.
SHE LIVED
WITH HER
PARENTS AND
WORKED IN
AN OFFICE.

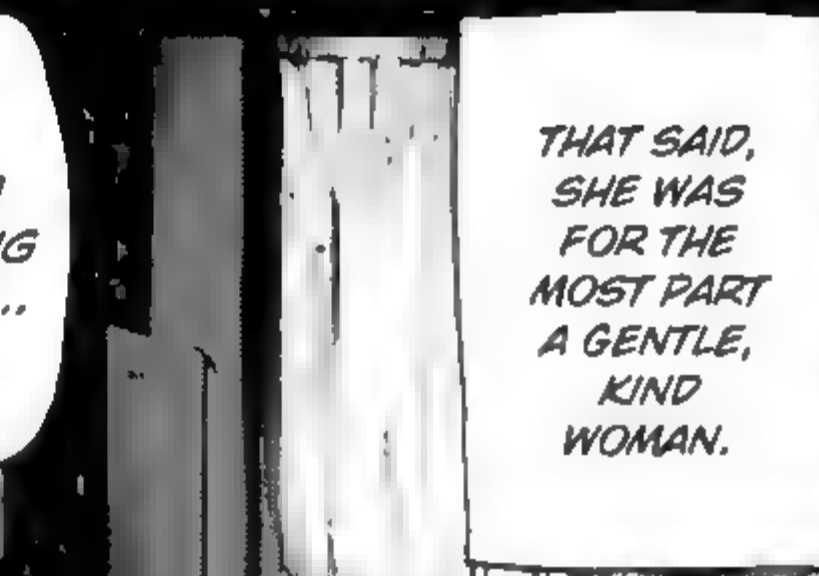


SHE LOVED
TO DRINK
AND INSULT
PEOPLE.



WILL
YOU KEEP
SATURDAY
NIGHT FREE?
I MADE
PLANS.

I'M
GOING
NOW...



THAT SAID,
SHE WAS
FOR THE
MOST PART
A GENTLE,
KIND
WOMAN.



OH,
YOU
FORGOT
THIS...

GOOD-
NIGHT.



THAT
WAS
MY LIFE
BACK
THEN.



USUAL
DAYS
PASSING
IN THE
USUAL
WAY...

...
INEVITABLY
LEADING TO
THE USUAL
FUTURE.





FEELING
LIKE A
JIGSAW
PUZZLE
WITH A
MISSING
PIECE...

BUT STILL
BUYING INTO
THE CONCEPT
THAT BEING
HUMAN
MEANT
BECOMING
AN ADULT



BUT

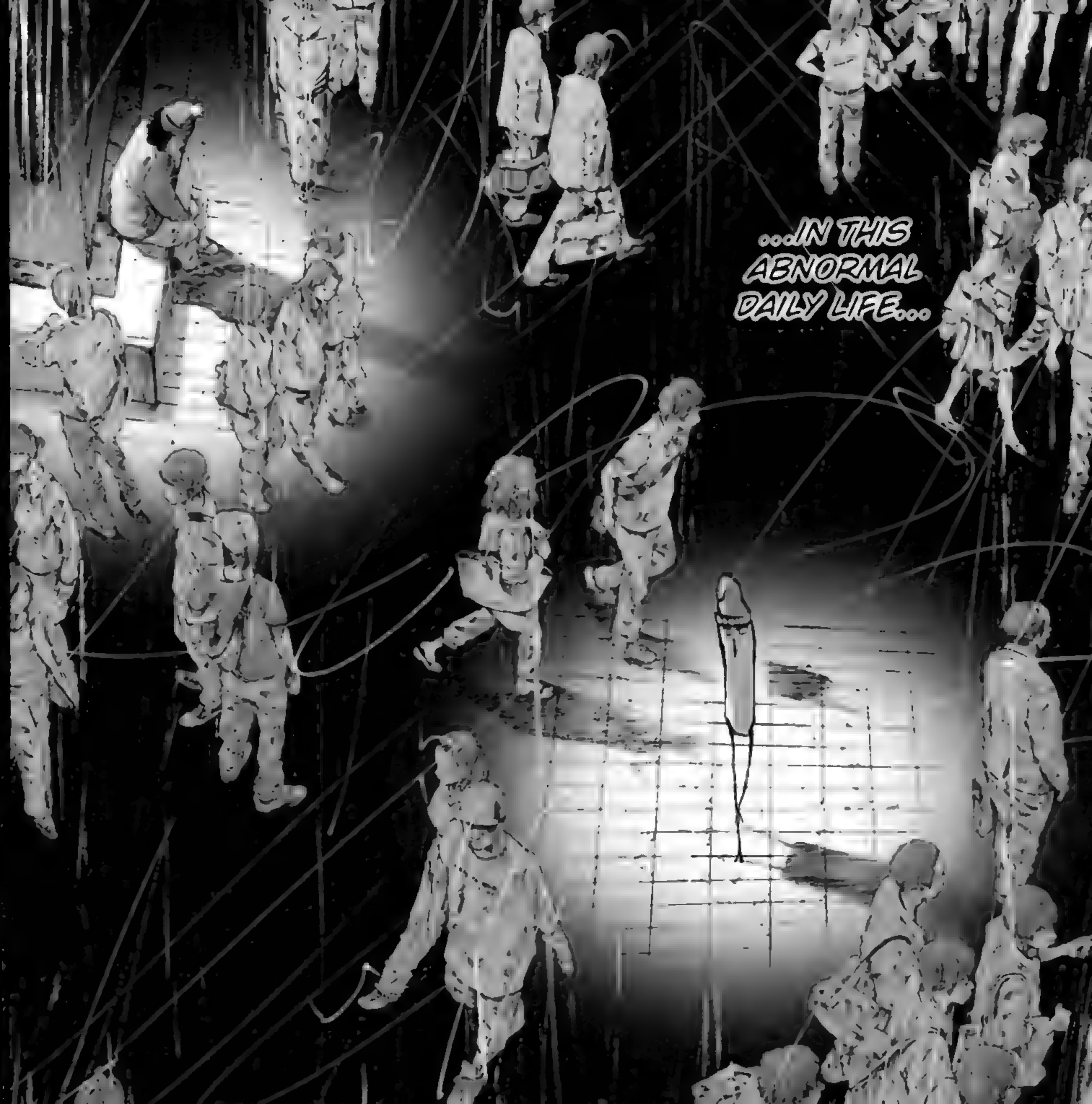
BUT
WHAT
IF

Dreams
For Sale Cheap
\$1.00



BUT I'D
KEEP MY
COOL
COMPOSURE.

HOW
DO I
THOUGHT.







...MR.
ONODERA,
PLEASE
EXCUSE
ME...

HEE
HEE...



MRS.
OIKE
BROUGHT
SOME
CAKE.
WOULD
YOU LIKE
SOME?

MRS.
YAGI!



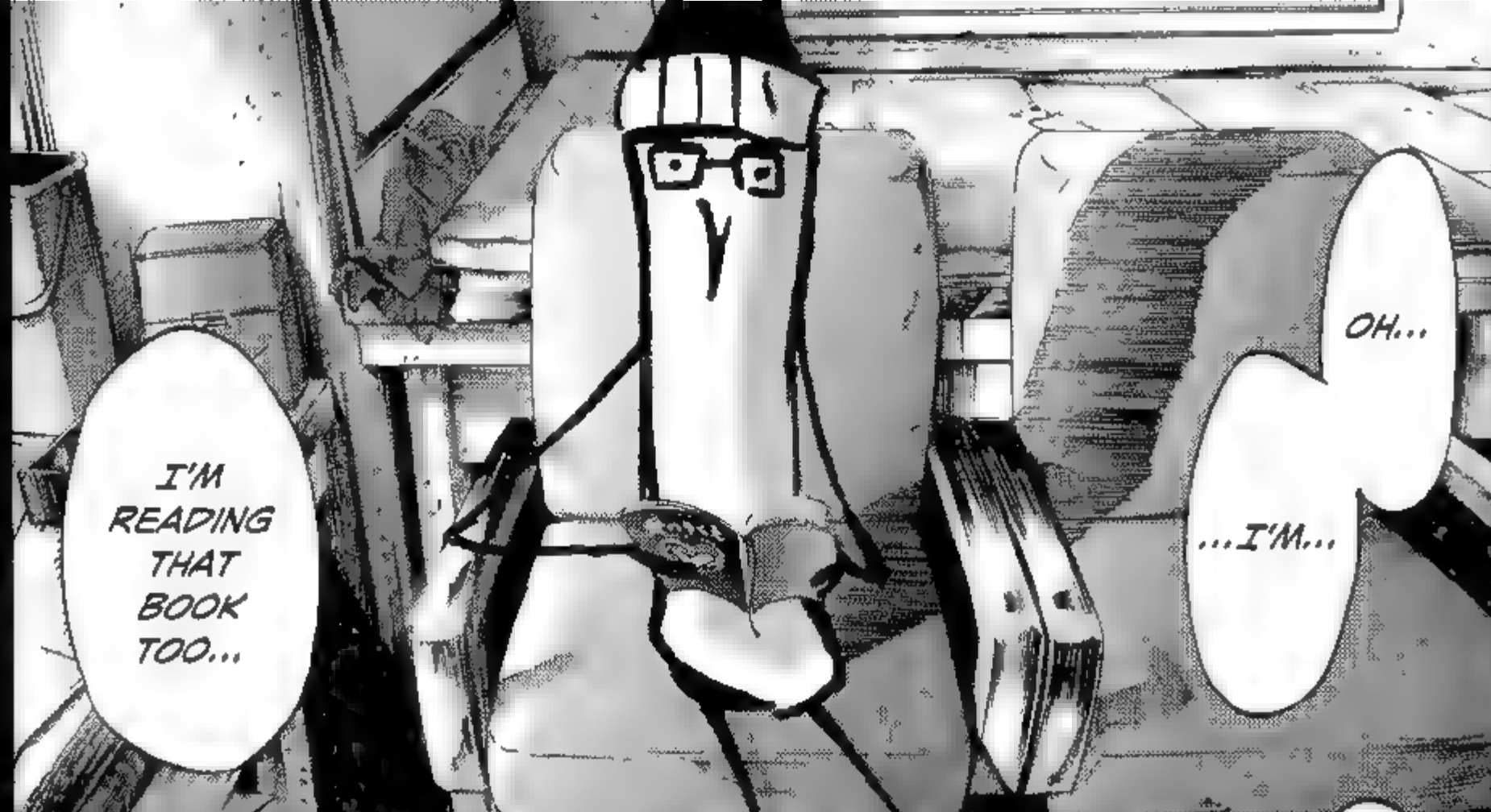
SHE'LL USE
WHATEVER
EXCUSE SHE
CAN FIND TO
GET CLOSER
TO YOU, MR.
ONODERA...

SHE
DRAGGED
ME
HERE...

...I'M
REALLY
SORRY
ABOUT
MY
MOM...

UM...





I'M
READING
THAT
BOOK
TOO...

OH...

...I'M...

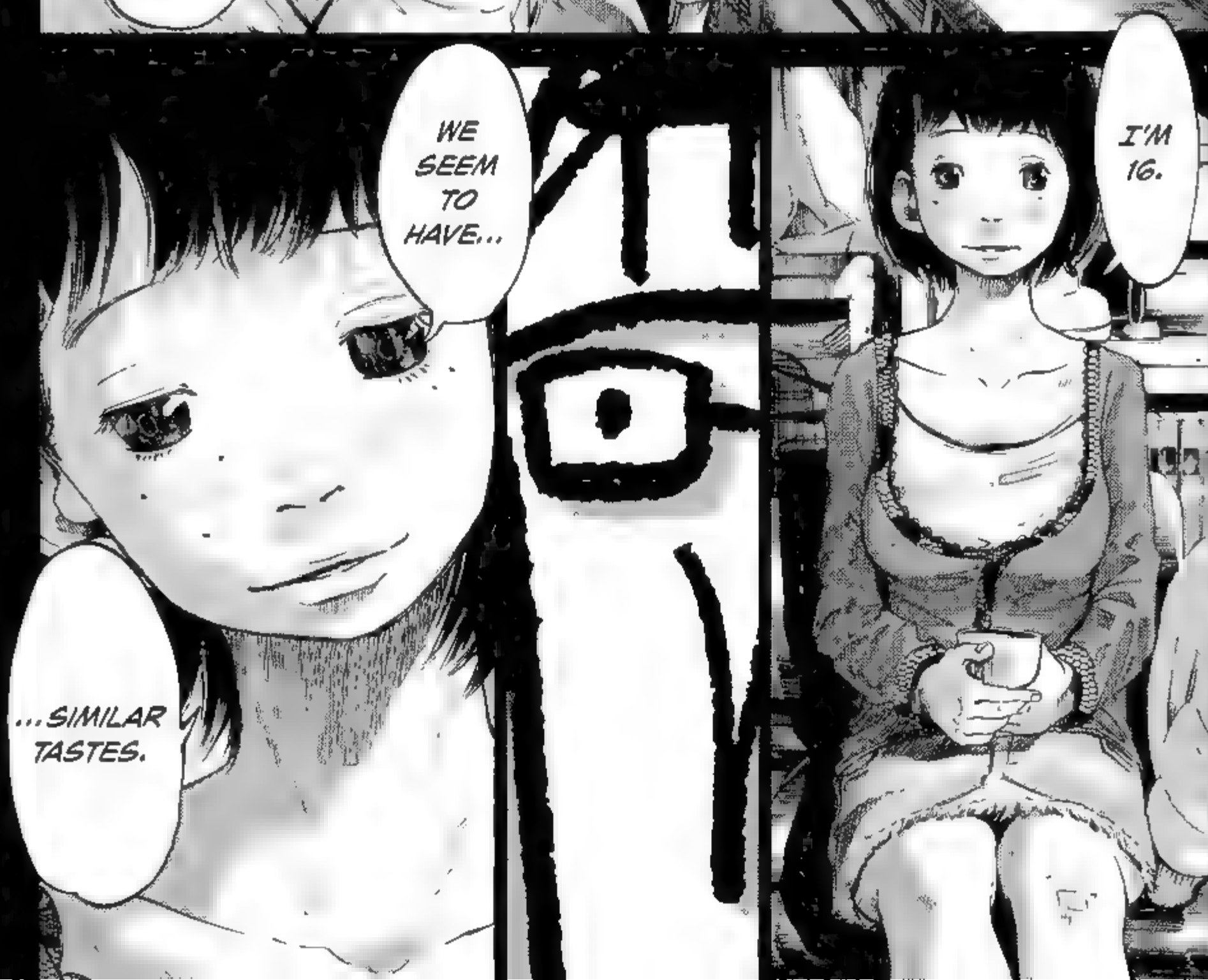


...UM,
HOW
OLD ARE
YOU?

THIS IS
PRETTY
MATURE
...

WHAT A
COINCI-
DENCE!

OH,
WOW!



WE
SEEM
TO
HAVE...

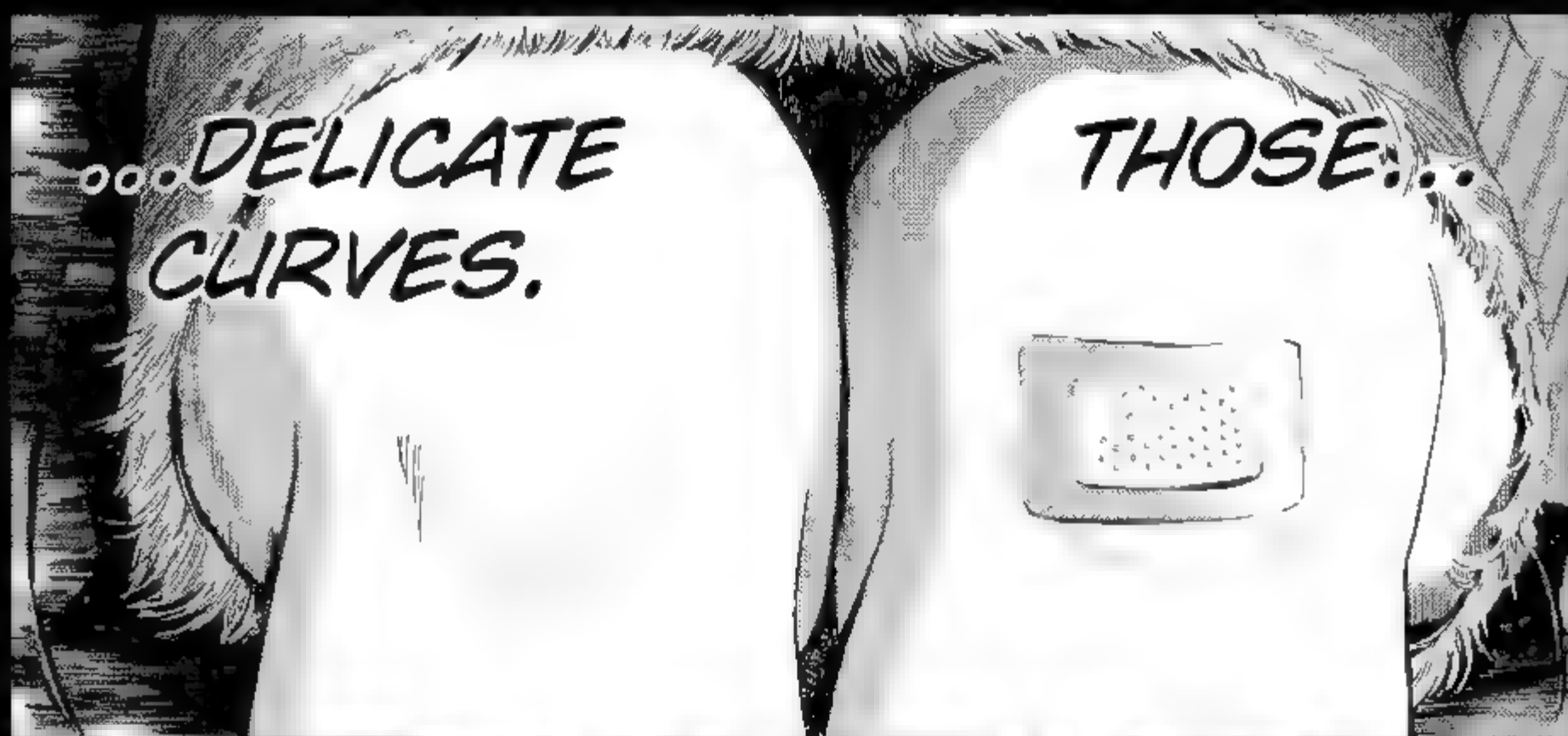
...SIMILAR
TASTES.

I'M
16.



...FULL,
ABUNDANT
SHAPE...

THAT...



...DELICATE
CURVES.

THOSE...





Chapter 34

THINKING BACK,
THAT GIRL WAS THE
EXTRAORDINARY
THAT SUDDENLY
APPEARED IN MY
ORDINARY LIFE.



OR MAYBE I WAS
PROJECTING THE
INEFFABLE SOMETHING
I'D BEEN LOOKING FOR
ON TO THIS GIRL, WHO
WAS MORE THAN TEN
YEARS YOUNGER
THAN ME.



OH.



...WELLING
IN HER
DOWNCAST
EYES.

I EASILY
IMAGINED THE
WORDS
"BULLYING" AND
"OSTRACISM"...

UHH...
IS IT A
HOLIDAY?



BUT
TODAY'S
A
SCHOOL
DAY.



I'M...

I'M
USUALLY
TIED UP BY
MY MOM
UNDER
HOUSE
ARREST...



UM...
ERRR...
I
MEAN...



WOW, 16!
THAT'S
YOUNG!
WHAT DO
KIDS DO
FOR FUN
THESE
DAYS?



HA
HA...

SORRY.

HA
HA
HA!

WHAT
A WAY
WITH
WORDS!



DO YOU
WANT TO
TRY THE
POTTERY
WHEEL?

OH...H...

THAT'S
WHAT I
THOUGHT.

IF SHE CAN
MAKE JOKES
ABOUT IT, THEN
IT'S PROBABLY
NOT SO BAD...

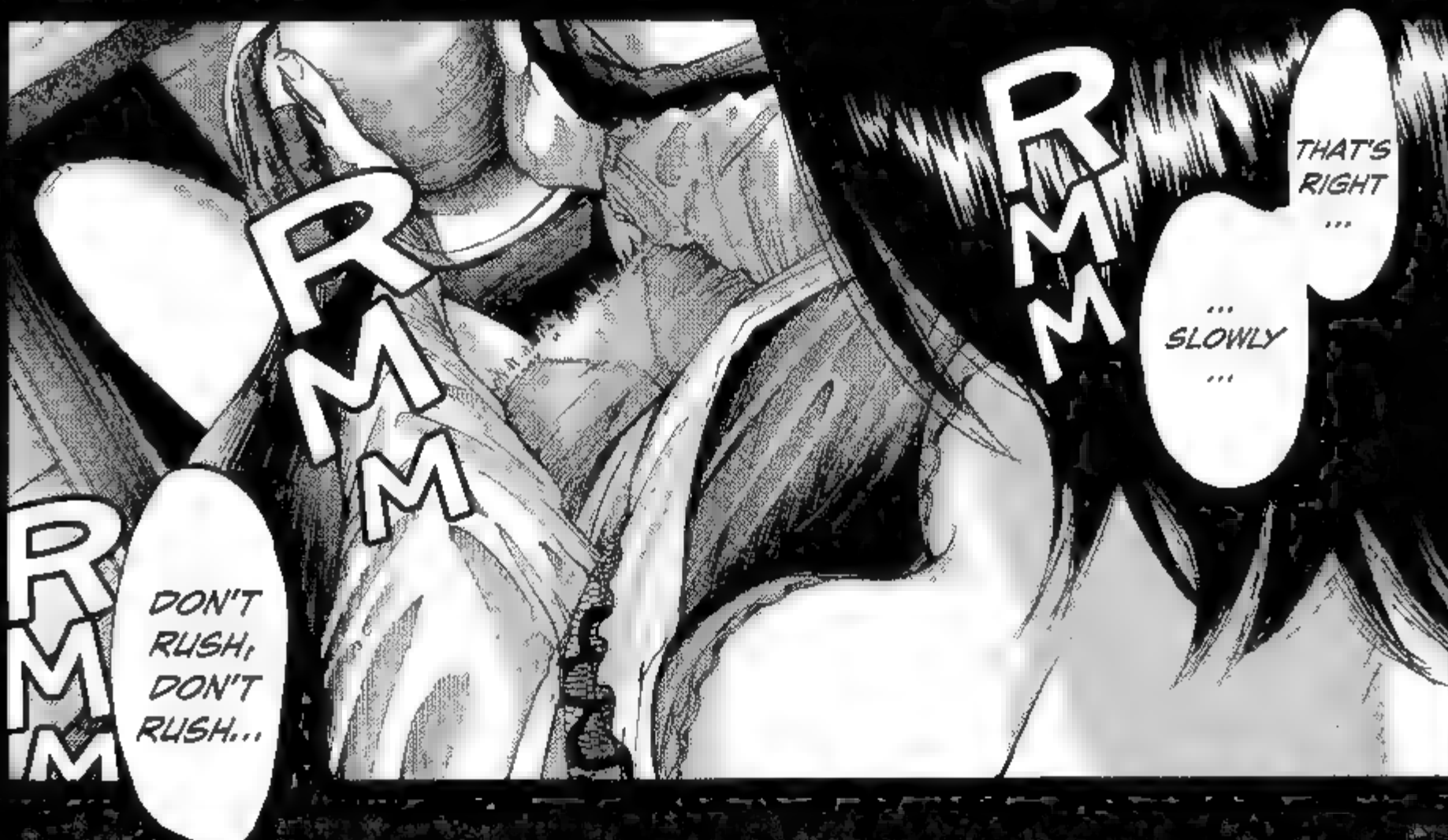


ABOVE ALL...

...CARRIED ON
THAT MOIST
JUNE AIR...

...HER SCENT...

...HER WARMTH.



...AND
PRODUCED
IN ME A
CHEMICAL
REACTION.

THAT PALE
SKIN LOOKED
LIKE IT WOULD
CRUMBLE AT
A TOUCH...

STROKE

STROKE

AND
STROKE

I
CONFESS!

STROKE

I WAS
VIOLENTLY...

...ERECT!



OH, IT'S
YOU, SIS...
I'M AT
WORK...



YUICHI,
TELEPHONE!



OKAY!
I'LL
HEAD
OVER
RIGHT
NOW!



PUNPUN
DIDN'T
COME
HOME
FROM
SCHOOL
?!

HUH?

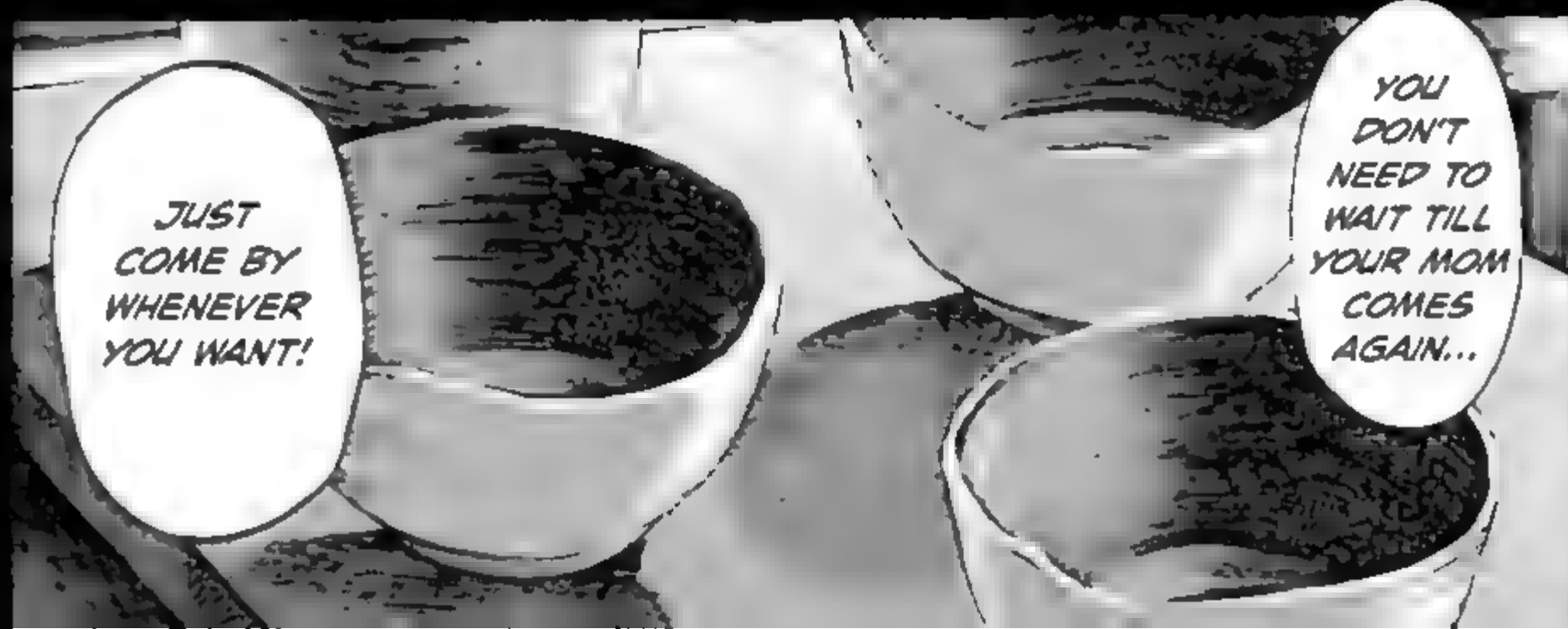


...BUT
I WANTED
TO SHOW
YOU HOW TO
APPLY GLAZE
AND SOME
OTHER
STUFF...

SOME-
THING'S
COME
UP...

...I'M
REALLY
SORRY.

WEEELL
...



JUST
COME BY
WHENEVER
YOU WANT!

YOU
DON'T
NEED TO
WAIT TILL
YOUR MOM
COMES
AGAIN...

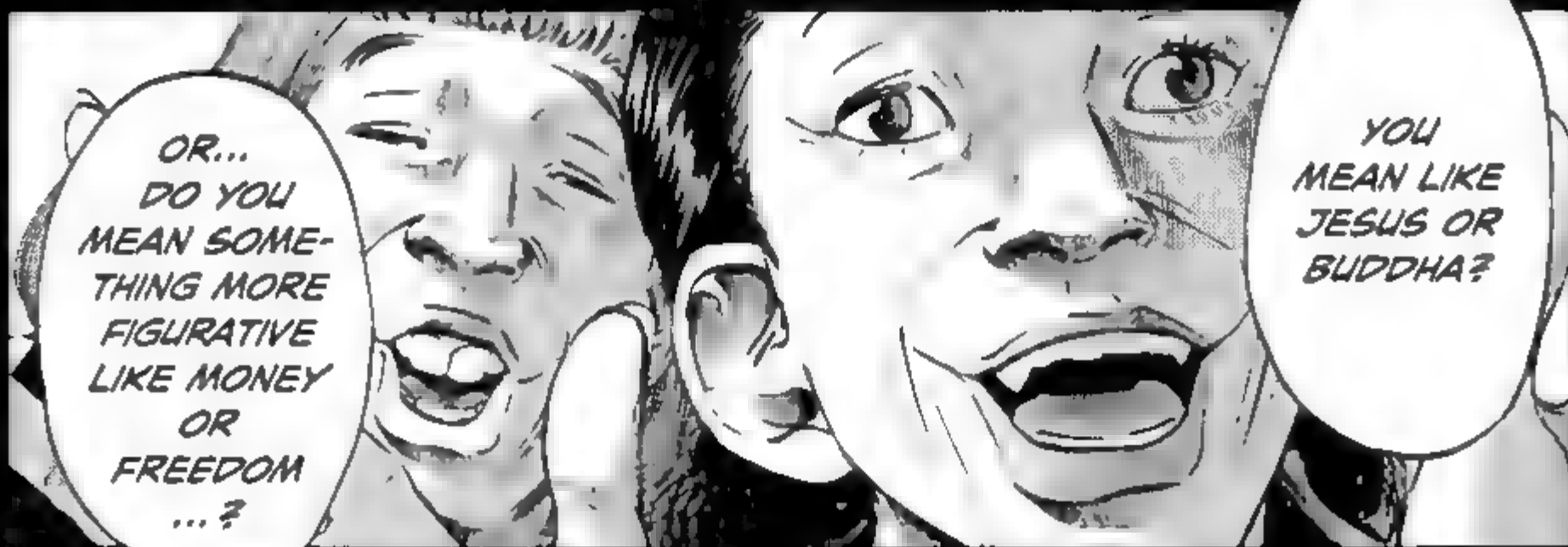




I'VE
NEVER
REALLY
THOUGHT
ABOUT
IT...

GOD...?

NOT
REALLY
...



OR...
DO YOU
MEAN SOME-
THING MORE
FIGURATIVE
LIKE MONEY
OR
FREEDOM
...?

YOU
MEAN LIKE
JESUS OR
BUDDHA?



I...



...DON'T
KNOW ABOUT
COMPLICATED
THINGS LIKE
THAT...





"IF THERE IS
A GOD, WHY
ON EARTH DID
HE SEND THIS
GIRL INTO MY
ORDINARY
EXISTENCE?"

THAT'S
WHEN I
THOUGHT...

YEAH!

I
PROMISE!

YOU
KNOW YOU
SHOULDN'T
COME THIS
FAR BY
YOURSELF!

YOUR
MOM AND
DAD ARE
DESPERATELY
LOOKING FOR
YOU RIGHT
NOW!

OH,
THANK
GOD!

I
LOOKED
EVERY-
WHERE!

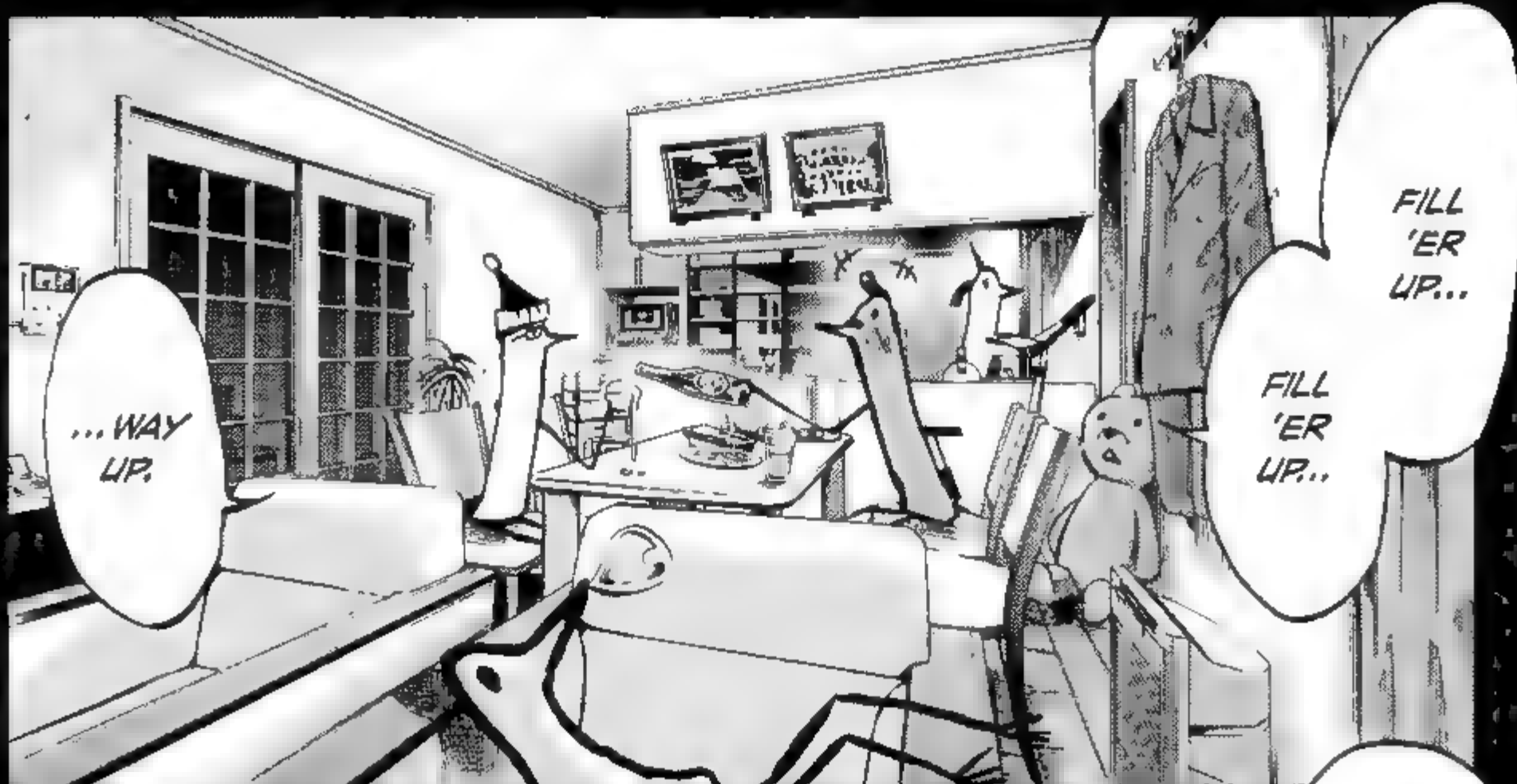
I
DIDN'T
GET IT.

NO, I
WAS JUST
PRETENDING
NOT TO
UNDERSTAND.



DON'T
HOLD
BACK-
JUST
KEEP
DRINKING!

HEEY,
YUICHI!
I'M SO
SORRY TO
TROUBLE
YOU, BUT
YOU REALLY
HELPED
US OUT
TODAY!



...WAY
UP.

FILL
'ER
UP...

FILL
'ER
UP...



UHH...

I'M
NOT
SURE...



BY
THE WAY,
YUICHI, HOW
ARE THINGS
WITH THAT
UG-I MEAN
CHARMING
GIRLFRIEND
OF YOURS?

ISN'T IT
TIME YOU
THOUGHT
ABOUT
MAR-
RIAGE?

...IT
MIGHT'VE
ALL BEEN
DECIDED
ALREADY.

BY
THEN...

NO...





DO YOU
REMEM-
BER YOUR
PROMISE?

HELLO.





ME?

I WAS
COMPLETELY
AVERAGE.

WHAT
KIND
OF
STUDENT
WERE
YOU...

...MR.
ONODERA?



BUT I WAS
CONVINCED
THAT I WAS
SPECIAL, AND I
WAS SEARCHING
FOR THE THING
THAT SET ME
APART FROM
EVERYONE
ELSE...



...I SPEND
MY DAYS
LIVING IN
FEAR OF
SOMETHING
SPILLING
OUT OF MY
HEART...

SO
NOW...

...LIKE
WATER
FROM A
BOWL,
ESCAPING
THE LIMITS
OF
SURFACE
TENSION.

"I WAS
SO YOUNG
BACK THEN."
BUT THAT'S
JUST A
JUSTIFICA-
TION.

WHEN I
LOOK
BACK ON
IT NOW,
I TELL
MYSELF..



...BUT
NOT
SATISFAC-
TION.

I HAVE
ACCEP-
TANCE...

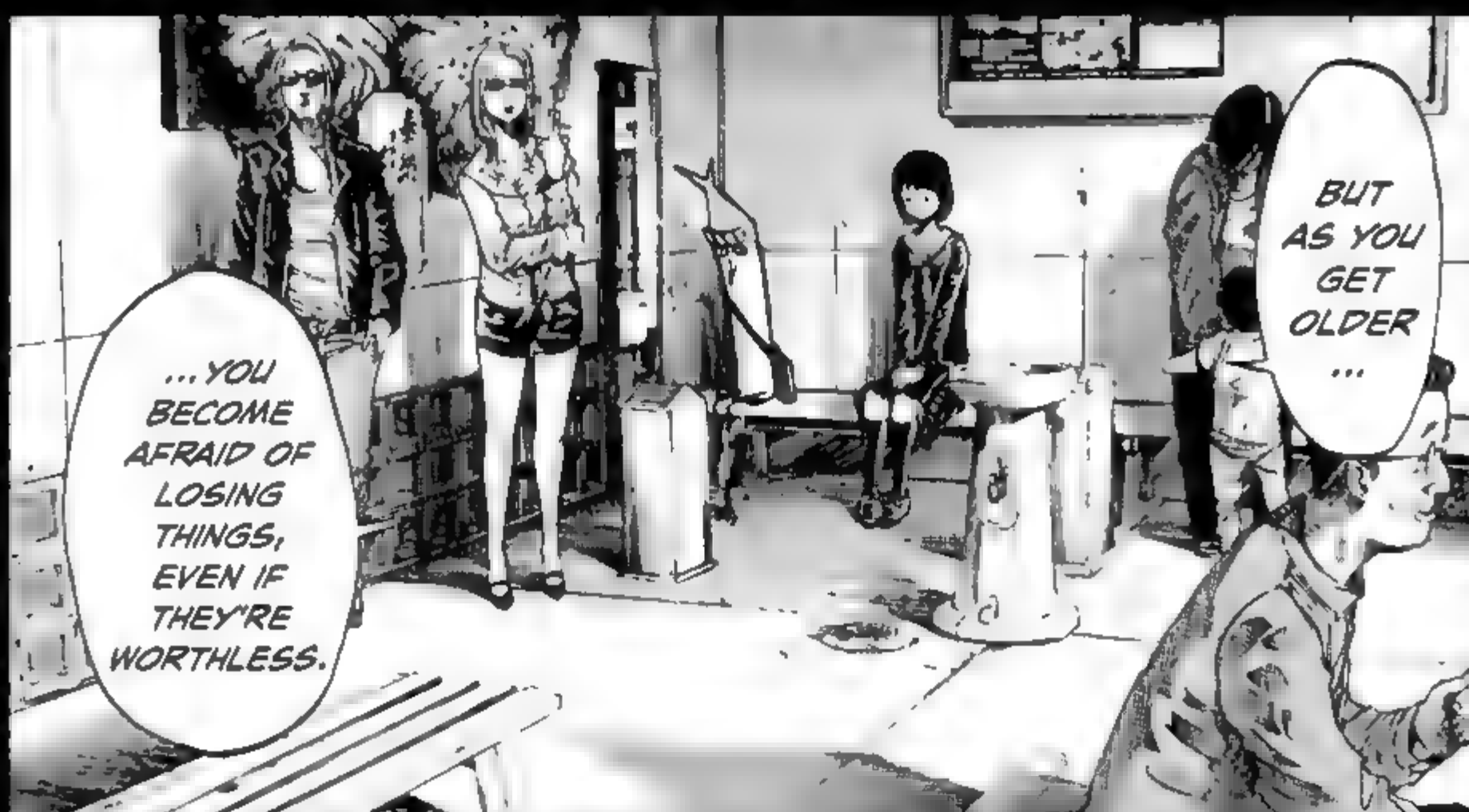


MR.
ONO-
DERA...

ARE
YOU
HAPPY
NOW?



REALLY...
I JUST
WANT TO
BE ABLE TO
FOCUS ON MY
POTTERY...
THAT'S ALL.



... YOU
BECOME
AFRAID OF
LOSING
THINGS,
EVEN IF
THEY'RE
WORTHLESS.

BUT
AS YOU
GET
OLDER
...



... I'M JUST
BABBLING.
MAYBE IT'S
TIME TO GO
HOME.

SORRY
...



I...

WHAT ABOUT YOU...

ALL I WANT IS TO BE WITH THE PERSON I TREASURE.

WHAT DO YOU THINK HAPPINESS IS?



LET'S BOTH FOCUS ON OUR GOALS, STARTING TOMORROW.

DON'T LET THE BULLYING GET YOU DOWN.

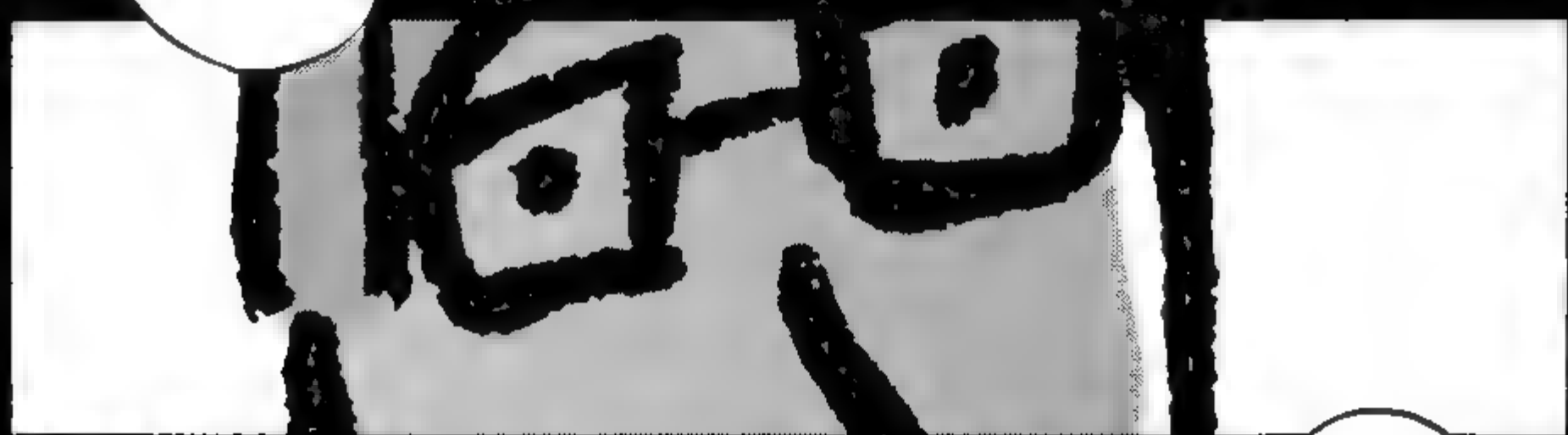


AH...



YOU'LL BE FINE!

I'M SURE YOU'LL FIND HAPPINESS ONE DAY!





BUT
MY
MOM...

THERE'S
SOME-
THING
WRONG
WITH
HER...



SCHOOL
ONLY
LASTS
THREE
YEARS.



... THAT
MY FRIENDS
TURNED
THEIR BACKS
ON ME AND
ALL MY
CLASSMATES
TALK ABOUT
ME BEHIND
MY BACK.

I
DON'T
CARE
...



BUT WHEN
I'M AT
HOME, I
REALLY
AM TIED TO
A POST.

SHE SAYS
IT'S TO
PREVENT
IT FROM
HAPPENING
AGAIN...



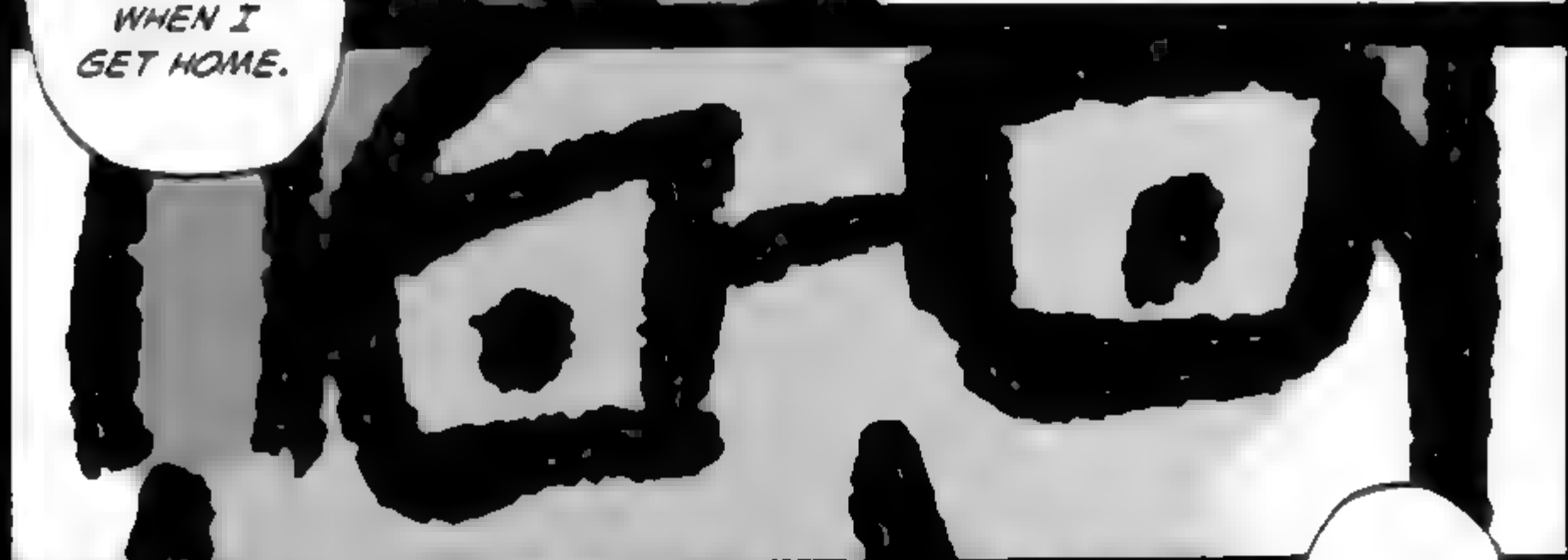
... GROWING
OLD, STUCK
ALONE IN
A SMALL
ROOM.

I'M
PROBABLY
GOING TO
SPEND
THE REST
OF MY
LIFE...



I PUSHED
MY MOM
AND
PRACTICALLY
RAN AWAY TO
GET HERE
TODAY..

I DON'T
KNOW WHAT
SHE'LL
DO TO ME
WHEN I
GET HOME.



I
MIGHT..



...END
UP
DEAD.



HELP
ME!



GOODNIGHT PUNPUN INIO ASANO
Part Three

BACKGROUND ASSISTANTS	Yuki Toribuchi Satsuki Sato
CG ASSISTANT	Hisashi Saito
COOPERATION	Kumatsuto Yasumasa Iwama Yu Uehara



START

START
FROM THE
BEGINNING

BONUS
STAGE!

FINISH

TREASURE
CHEST

GOODNIGHT PUNPUN

Part Four



CAST OF CHARACTERS



PUNPUN ONODERA

A young, choco pie-loving guy. His favorite killer move is Shinku Hadoken from *Super Street Fighter II Turbo*.



MAMA ONODERA

Punpun's mother. She believes she was an angel in a past life. A bit of an alcoholic.



YUICHI ONODERA

Mama's younger brother. He's at an age where he can't be honest with himself. Currently working part-time at a video store.



AIKO TANAKA

The girl Punpun has loved since elementary school.



MIDORI OKUMA

She works part-time at a café but used to be a nurse.



YAGUCHI

A senior member of the badminton team. Rumor among the younger team members is that he has a huge dick.



KOMATSU

Punpun's classmate. The red comet of the badminton team.



MASUMI SEKI

Punpun's classmate. Has a very short fuse.



SHIMIZU

Punpun's classmate. Gets yelled at a lot.



NUMATA

The sexiest girl in class. Her favorite food is sesame seeds.



MRS. YAGI

A student at the pottery school where Yuichi worked five years ago.



A HIGH SCHOOLER WITH A SASSY HAIRCUT

Mrs. Yagi's daughter. She asks Yuichi for help, saying her mother is keeping her prisoner at home.



WASHIO

Yuichi's coworker at the pottery school. A rising star in the pottery world.



YUICHI'S EX-GIRLFRIEND

Aside from drinking a lot and gossiping about people, a gentle and kind woman.



CONTENTS

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STORY THUS FAR...

Punpun, an incredibly ordinary middle school student, is embroiled in a foolhardy contest with a senior member of the badminton team over Aiko Tanaka, his unrequited (?) love.





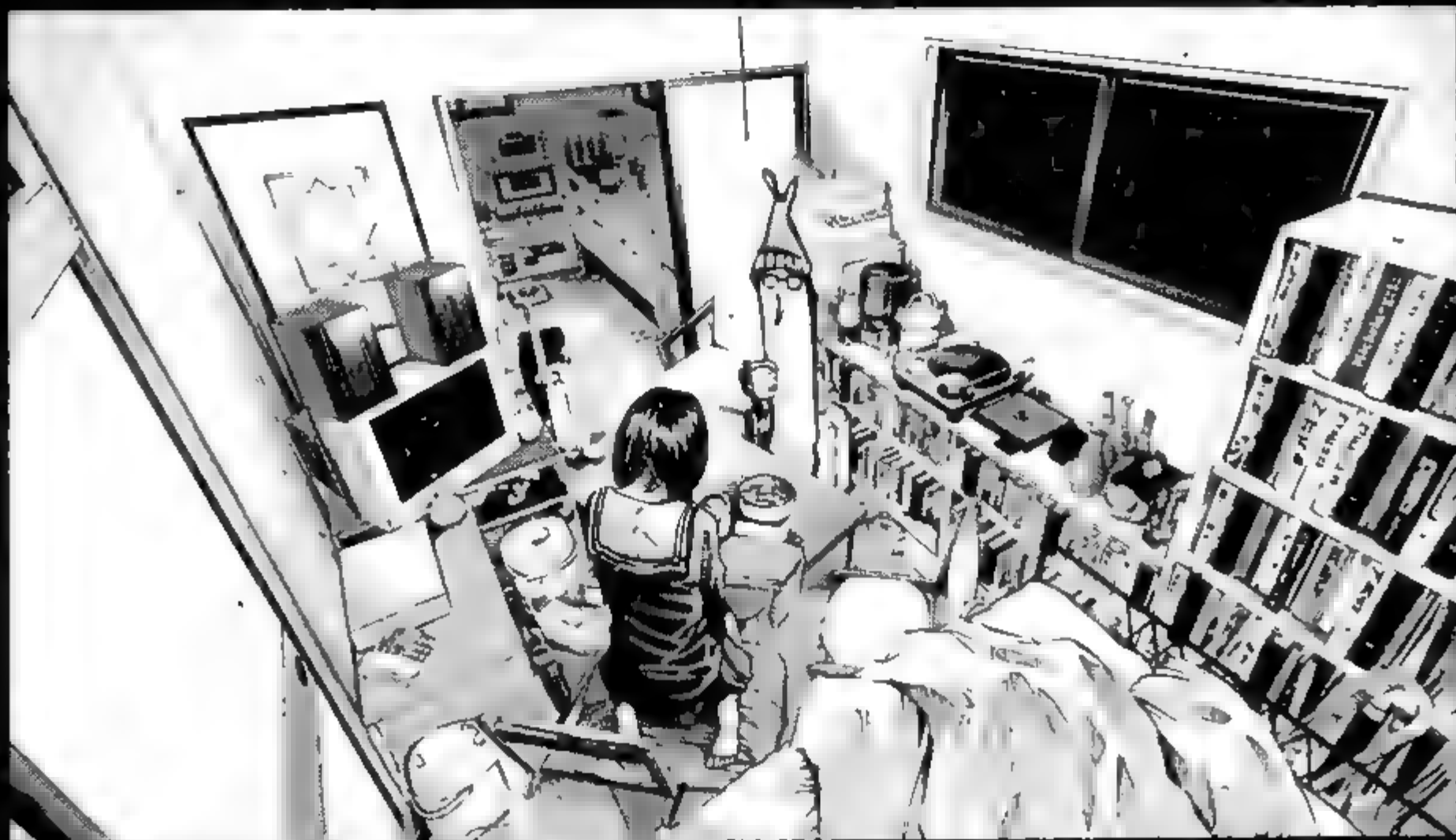
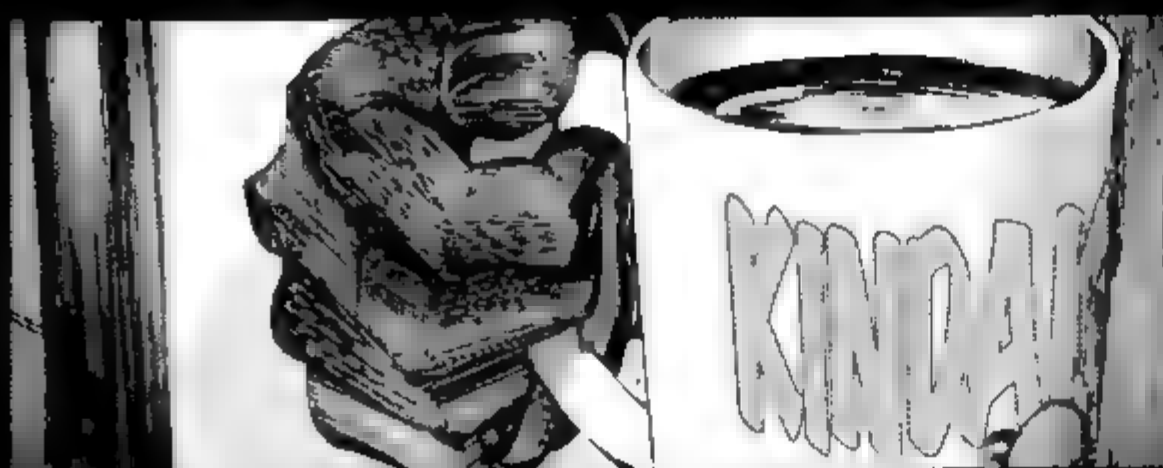
...AND I
DIDN'T HAVE
A CHANCE
TO THINK.

IN A FLASH,
THE RAIN HAD
INTENSIFIED.















RR

R

M

TA



BL



U

D



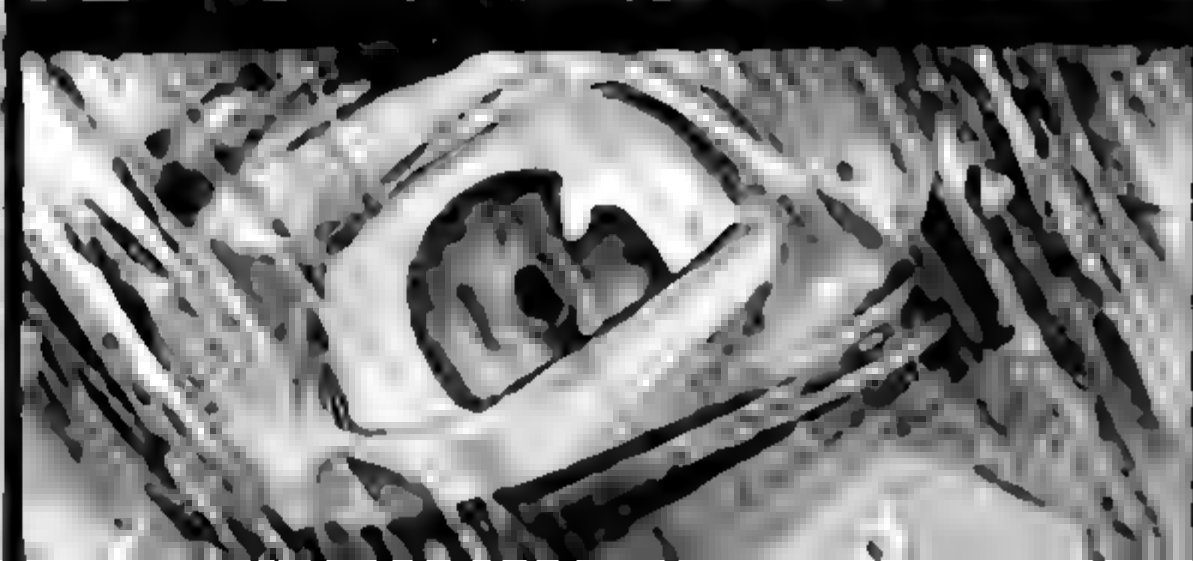
AHH
...



AHH
...

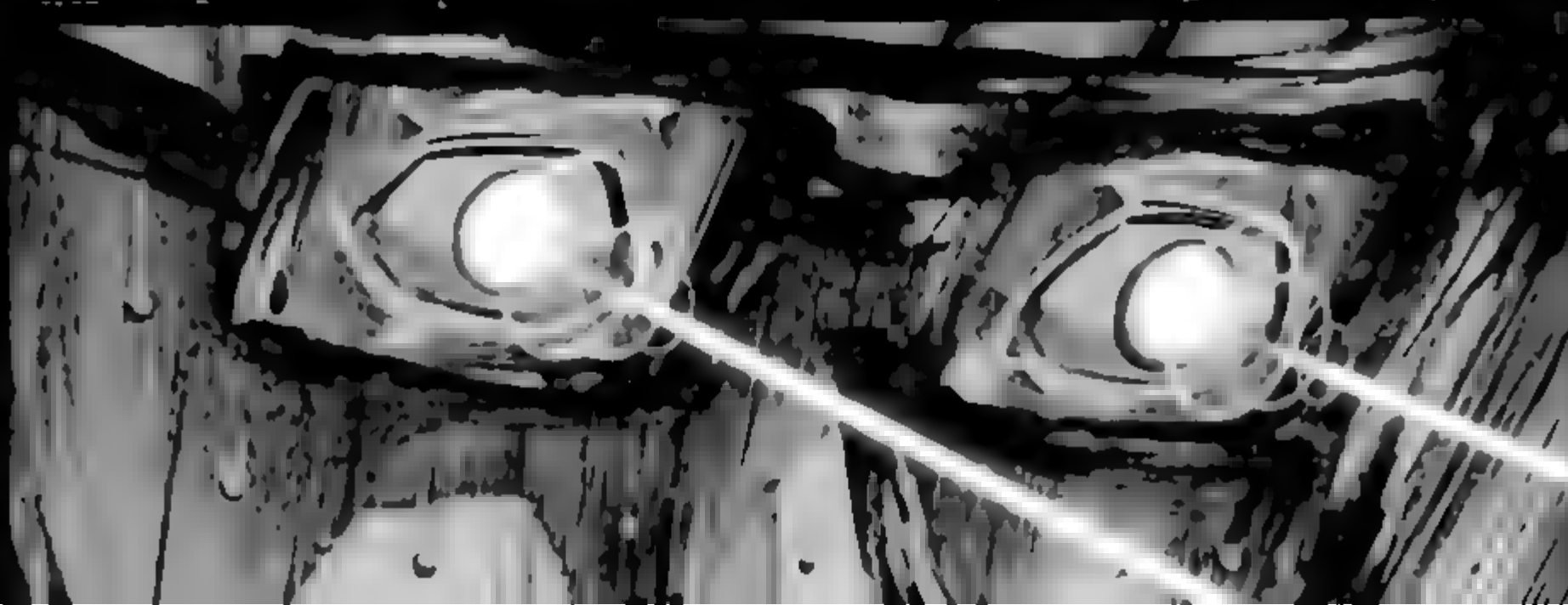
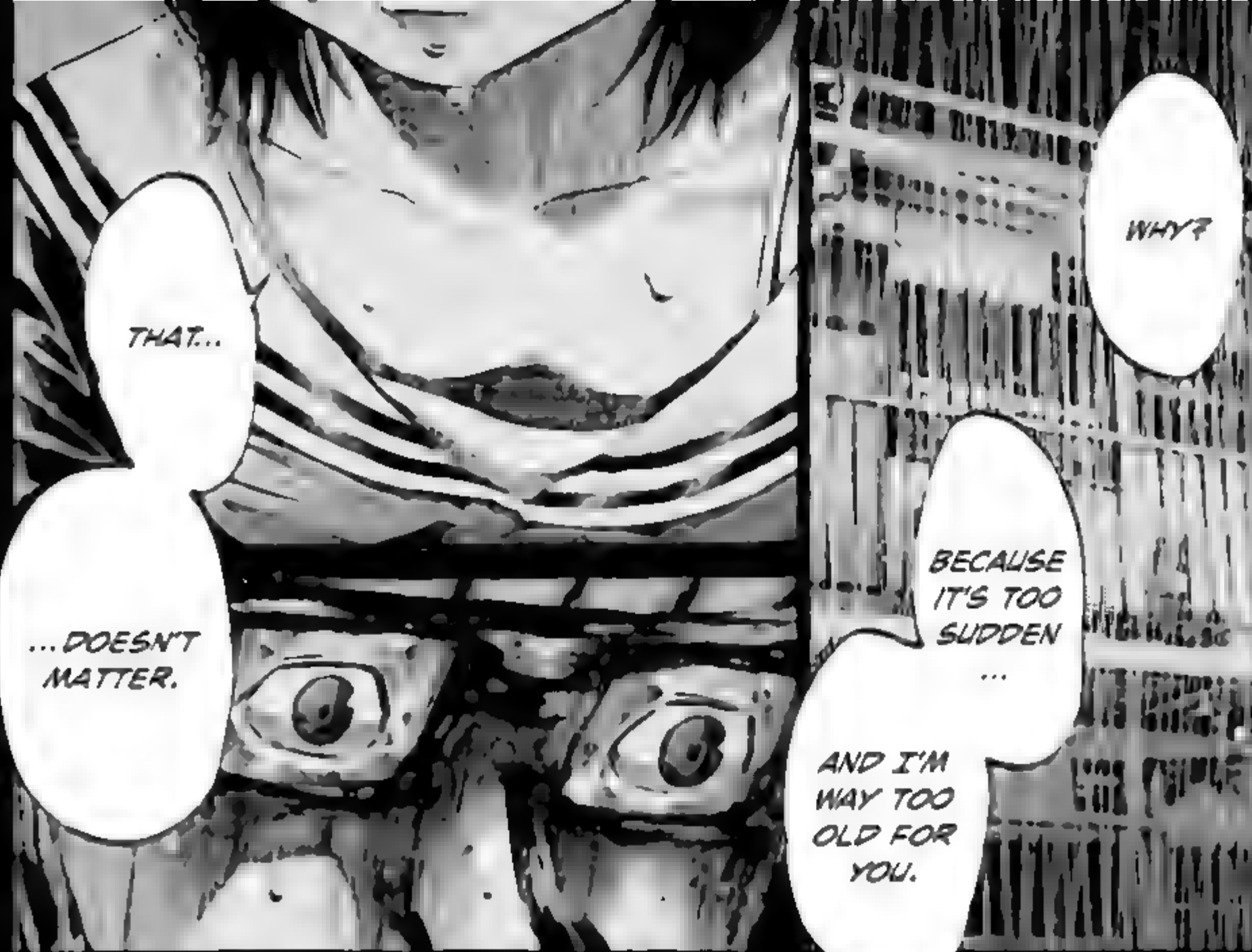



AH!













YOU'RE NOT
SATISFIED
WITH YOUR
LIFE NOW,
RIGHT?



THE
ONLY ONE
FOR ME,
YOU'RE.

YOU'RE
...



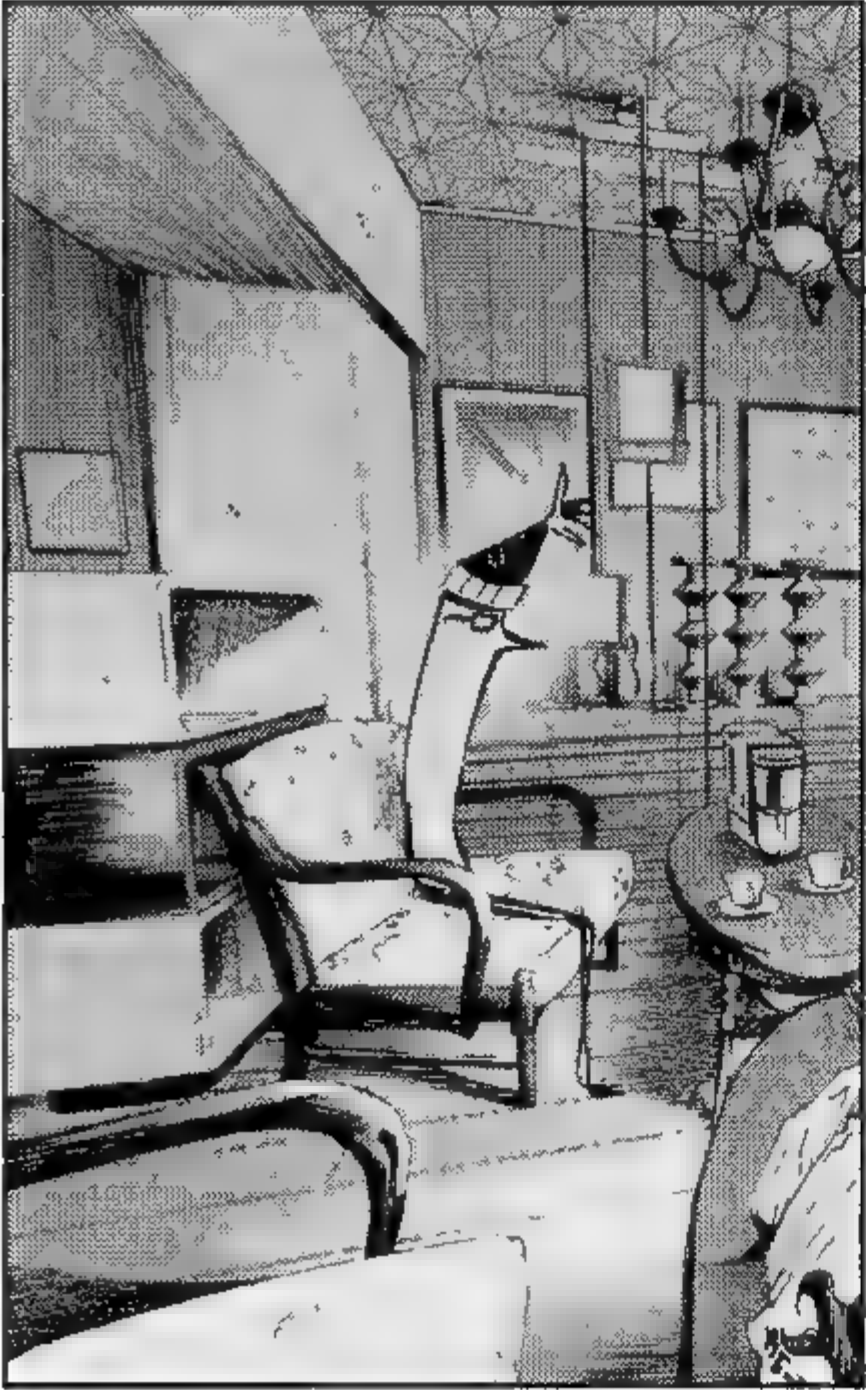
YOU SAID
"I'M SURE
YOU'LL FIND
HAPPINESS."

WHY
DON'T
YOU

FIND
IT WITH
ME?









УЧЕБНО-МЕТОДИЧЕСКОЕ ПОСОБИЕ







OH, THIS
SUCKS.
EVEN MY
UNDER-
WEAR'S
SOAKED.

WASNT
THAT
LIGHTNING
AMAZING
?



W

WHATS
UP? THIS
IS A
SURPRISE

WOW
THAT'S
A
BIG
SURPRISE
THANKS
FOR
THE
PRESENT
THAT'S
VERY
NICE



OH...

WHAT
DO YOU
MEAN,
A SUR-
PRISE?

...YEAH,
OF
COURSE
YOU DO.

I
ALWAYS
COME
OVER.

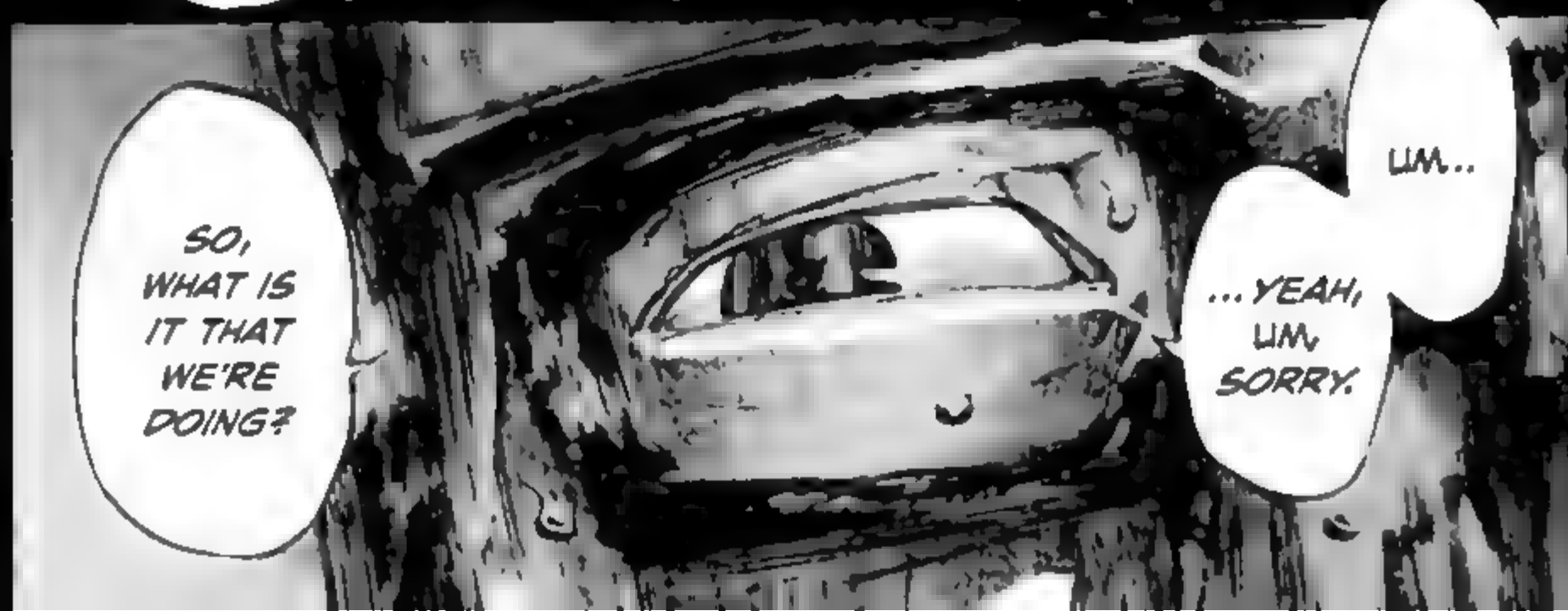


ERRR...

YOU IDIOT,
WEREN'T
YOU
LISTENING?

BESIDES,
I TOLD
YOU WE
WERE
GOING TO
DO SOME-
THING
TONIGHT.

REMEM-
BER, I
ASKED YOU
TO KEEP
SATURDAY
OPEN?



SO,
WHAT IS
IT THAT
WE'RE
DOING?

UM...

...YEAH,
UM
SORRY.



...AREN'T
RUNNING
BECAUSE
OF THE
STORM, SO
THEY'RE
STUCK...

BUT
THE
TRAINS
...

WELL...

...MY
PARENTS
WERE
GOING TO
YOKOHAMA
FOR THE
DAY...

...SO I
THOUGHT
THEY COULD
STOP HERE
AND WE
COULD ALL
HAVE DINNER
IN CHINA-
TOWN.

WE'LL
DO IT
ANOTHER
TIME.



OH...
HA HA.
GOT IT!



YUI,
YOU DO
UNDER-
STAND WHAT
THIS WAS
ABOUT,
RIGHT?

'GOT IT'?
YOU'RE
BEING
AWFULLY
CASUAL
ABOUT
THIS.

WELL
...

...WHY
DON'T YOU
GO HAVE
A BATH?
YOU DON'T
WANT TO
CATCH A
COLD.



...UM,
GO OUT
TO DINNER
AND TALK
ABOUT IT?

WHY
DON'T
WE...

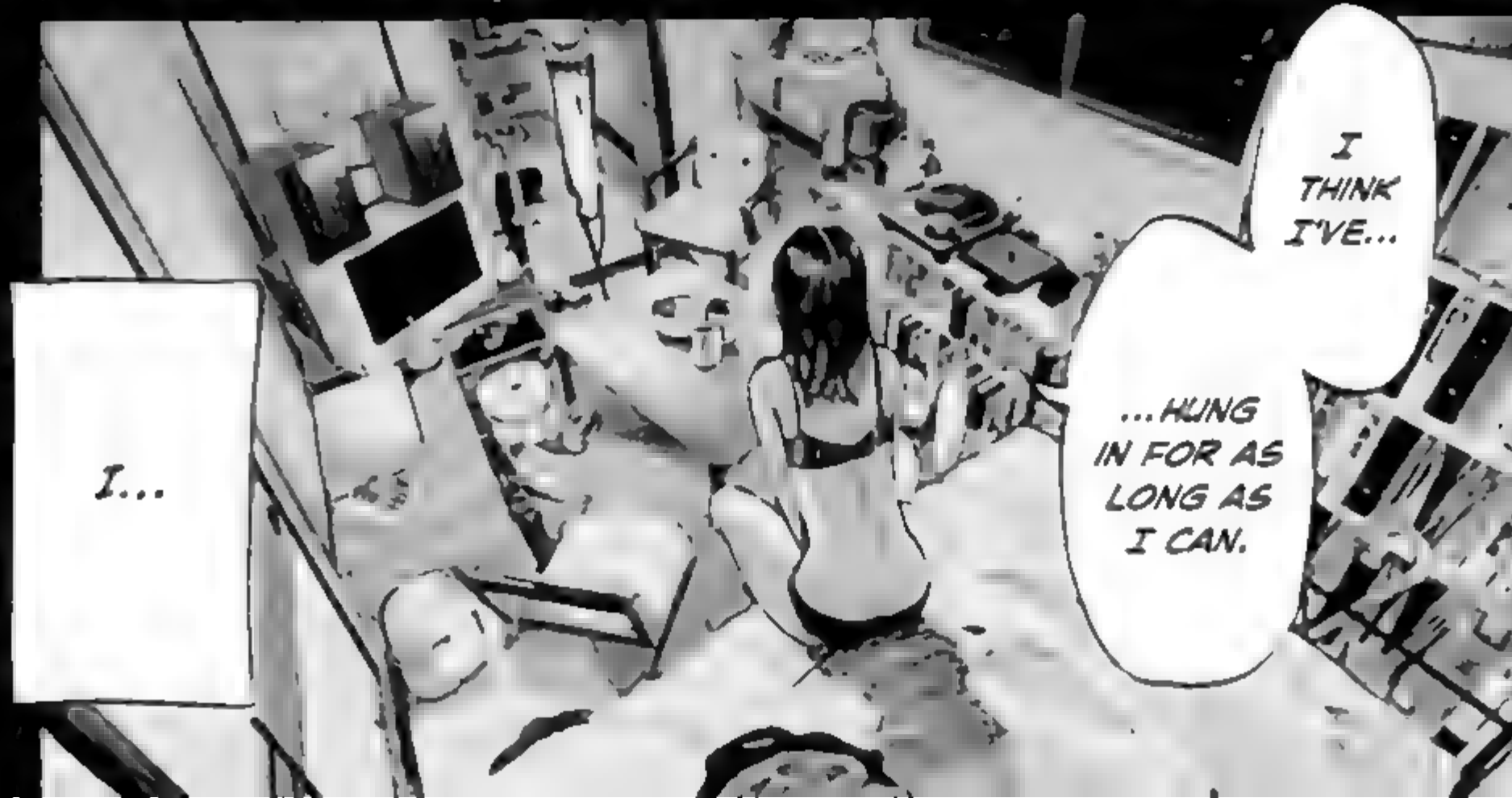
UH...
UAM...



...HATE
TALKING
ABOUT
MARRIAGE
SO MUCH?

DO YOU
REALLY...


YOU'RE
ACTING
WEIRD,
YUI.



I...

I
THINK
I'VE...

...HUNG
IN FOR AS
LONG AS
I CAN.



YUKKO AND
KANNA AND
AKI. ALL
MY COLLEGE
FRIENDS
ARE GETTING
MARRIED.

HAVE YOU
THOUGHT
ABOUT HOW
I FEEL,
GETTING
LEFT
BEHIND?

WE'VE
BEEN
GOING
OUT FOR
FIVE
YEARS
NOW...

...AND
I'M
GOING
TO BE
THIRTY
SOON.

...BUT
WHATEVER IT
WAS, I'VE BEEN
DESPERATELY
TRYING TO
SUSTAIN
CRUISE.

BY
THAT
INSTANT.

...YOU SAID,
"WHEN THINGS
SETTLE DOWN
AT WORK,
LET'S GET
MARRIED."

DO YOU
REMEM-
BER...?
RIGHT
AFTER YOU
STARTED
WORKING,
WE WENT TO
THAT AMUSE-
MENT PARK IN
NAGU, AND
ON THE
FERRIS
WHEEL.

I WAS CAUGHT
UP IN THOUGHTS
OF THE 16-YEAR-
OLD GIRL ON THE
OTHER SIDE OF
THE CLOSET DOOR
AND THE AROUSA.
HER INTENSE GAZE
WAS CAUSING

THE TRIVIAL
WORDS SPILLING
OUT OF THE MOUTH
OF THE WOMAN IN
FRONT OF ME JUST
BOUNCED OFF
MY EARS.



AND
I'VE
JUST...

...
HUNG IN
THERE.

I...

...
BELIEVED
YOU THEN,
YUI...

...BY
PERSISTENT
FANTASIES OF
HER PALE YOUNG
BREASTS AND
SPARSE, AS YET
UNGLIMPSED
PUBIC HAIRS.

...AFTER A
SIDELONG
GLANCE AT
THE ROTTEN
TOMATO OF MY
GIRLFRIEND'S
FACE...

LITTLE BY LITTLE, MY
CONSCIOUSNESS
WAS OVERWHELMED
BY THE IMAGE OF
THE UNDERWEAR I'D
GLIMPSED BETWEEN
HER THIGHS, AND...



SO I
WON'T
FORCE
YOU...

I
WON'T,
BUT...

B-
BUT...!

I UNDER-
STAND
HOW YOU
FEEL...

...I
SHOULD'VE
STUFFED
MY COCK IN
THE GIRL
THE FIRST
CHANCE I
GOT!

UGH, IF
THIS WAS
HOW IT WAS
GOING TO
PLAY OUT...



...SAY
YOU
LOVE
ME!

ALL I
ASK IS
THAT
YOU...

UHN UHN UH NIOH
YEAH UHN UHN FUCK
ME UHN UHN YEAH
DO IT UHN UHN HARDER



OH

...HEAVEN.



I
LOVE
YOU.

...IT WOULD
HAVE BEEN
BETTER IF
I'D NEVER
BEEN BORN.

...I
THOUGHT...

IN THE
MIST
OF THIS
VOMITOUS
SITUATION...

OH...
SIGH
...

SOMETHING
INSIDE ME...

...BURST.

OH...
...YOU'RE
HARD.



YOU'RE
SO
SILLY...

...YUI.

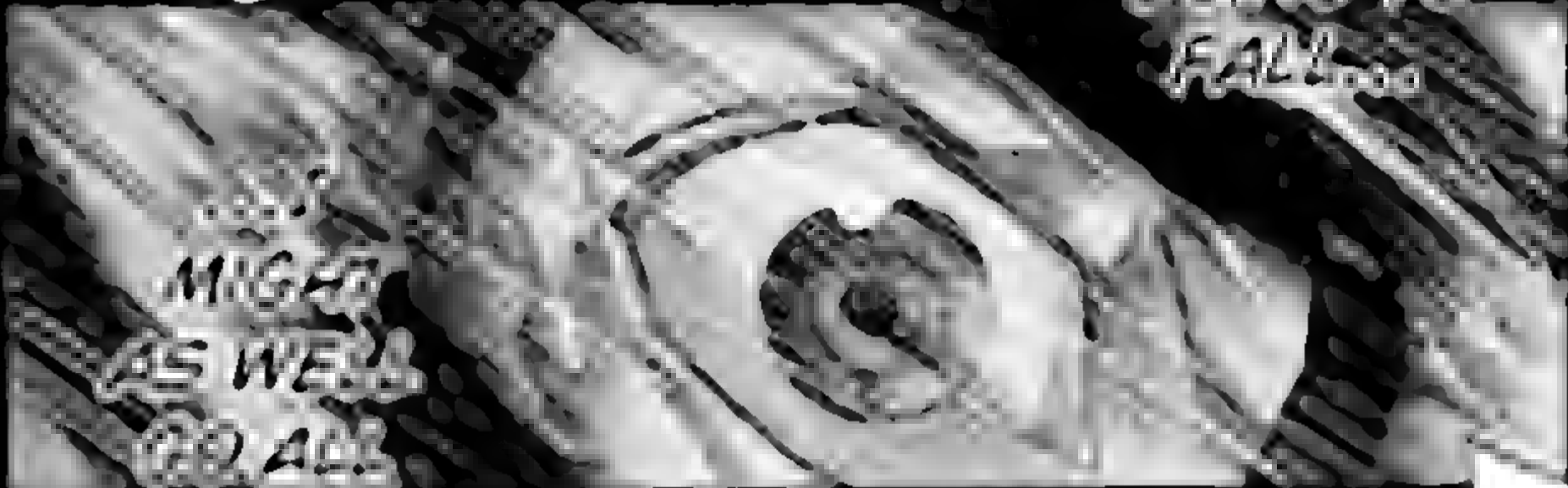


OH
....!

YEAH
...

YEAH!
YEAH!

IF I'M
GOING TO
FALL...



MIGHT
AS WELL
GO ALL
THE WAY?



OH
MY...

OH
MY...

OH
MY
GOD!



TOO
MUCH!

WHY
...?!

NO!

WHAT
?!

OH
...

WHOA...

AH
HH
HH!



I
GET
IT...

THIS
IS A
DREAM!

I'M

...

THERE
WAS
NEVER
A
GIRL...

OH
...
WHOA,
YEAH!

I'M

...

WHEN
I WAKE
UP, IT'LL
ALL

...
COM-
ING...

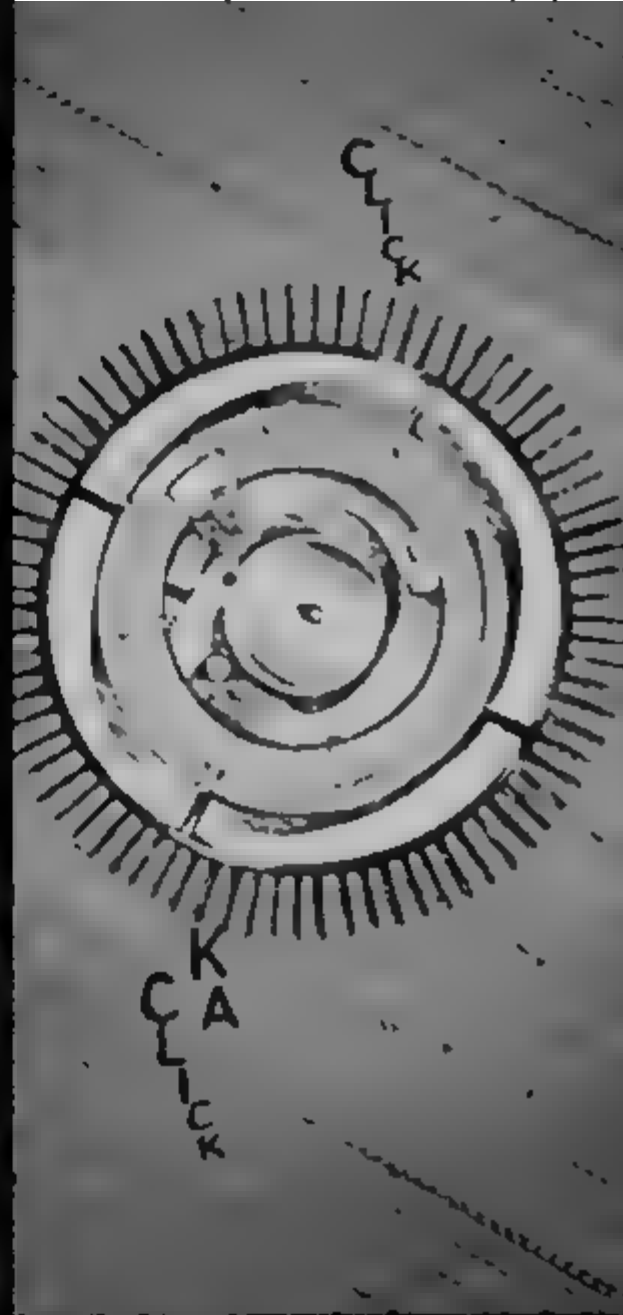
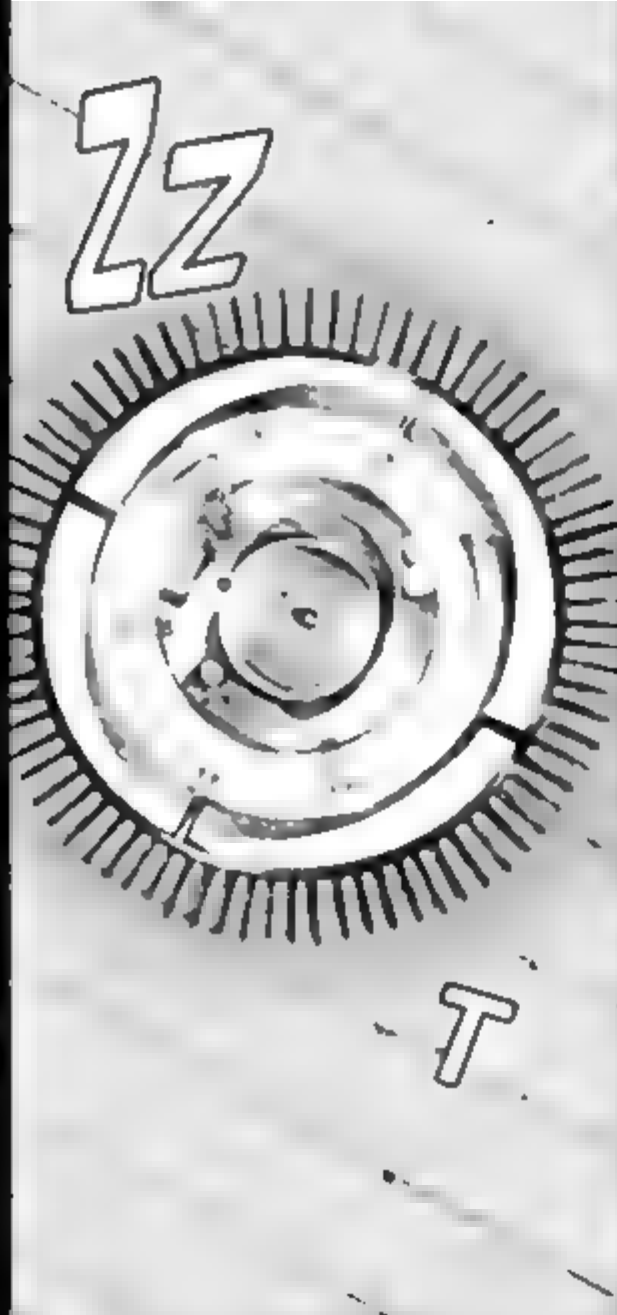
RETURN
TO
NORMAL

RIGHT.

I'M
COM-
ING!

THAT
— THAT
— THAT
— THAT

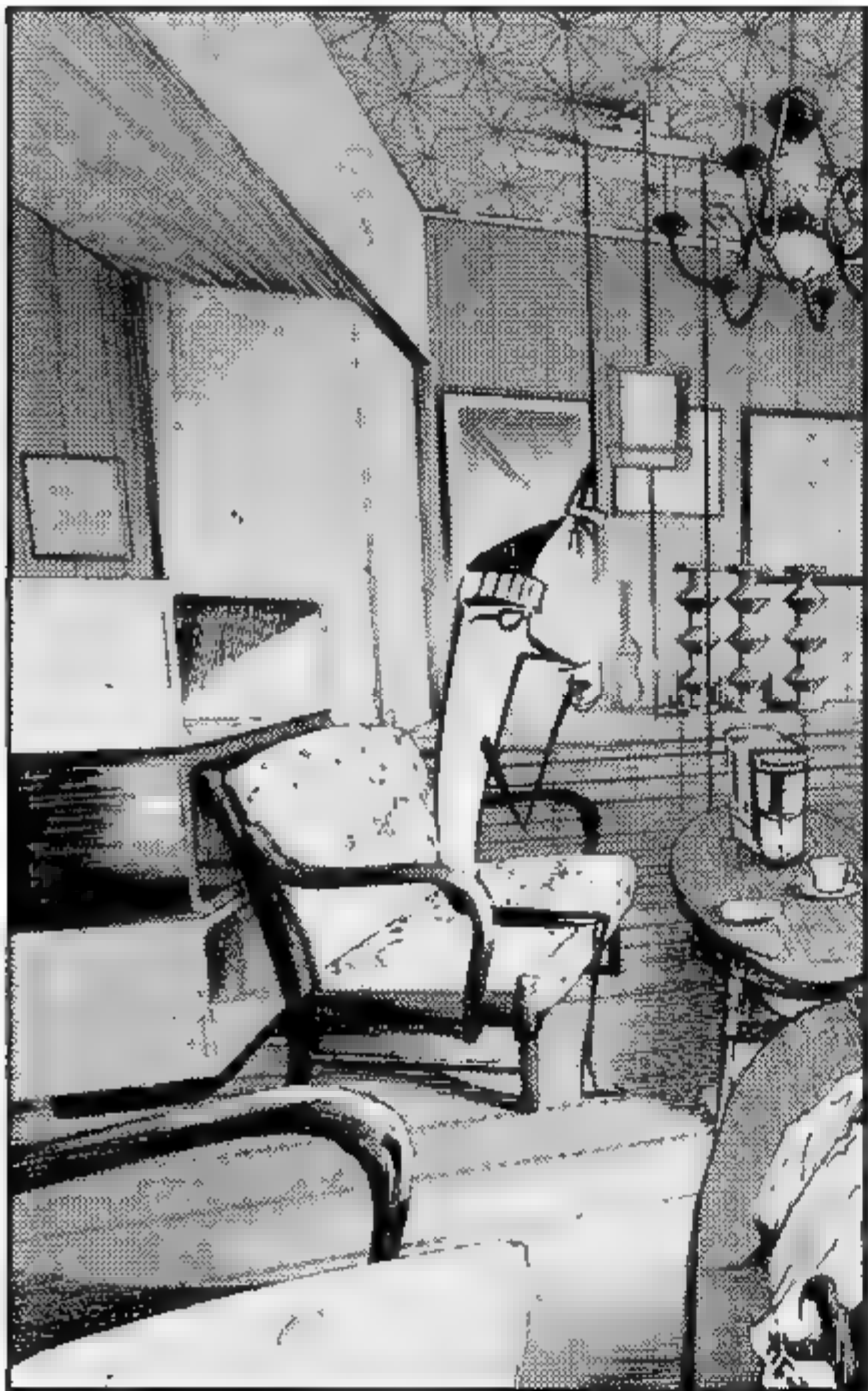


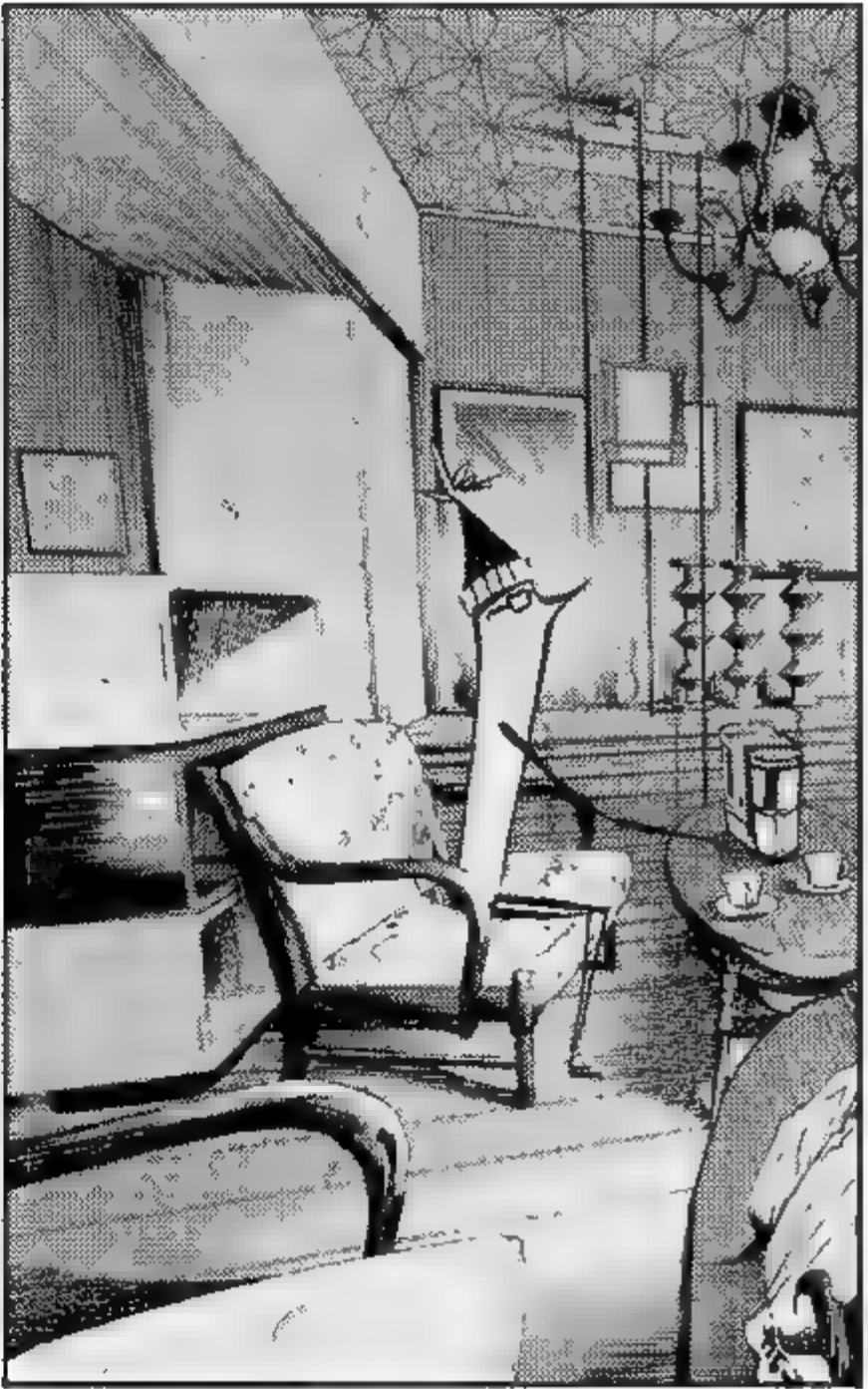




THERE
IS NO
GOD.

JUST
LIKE I
THOUGHT...







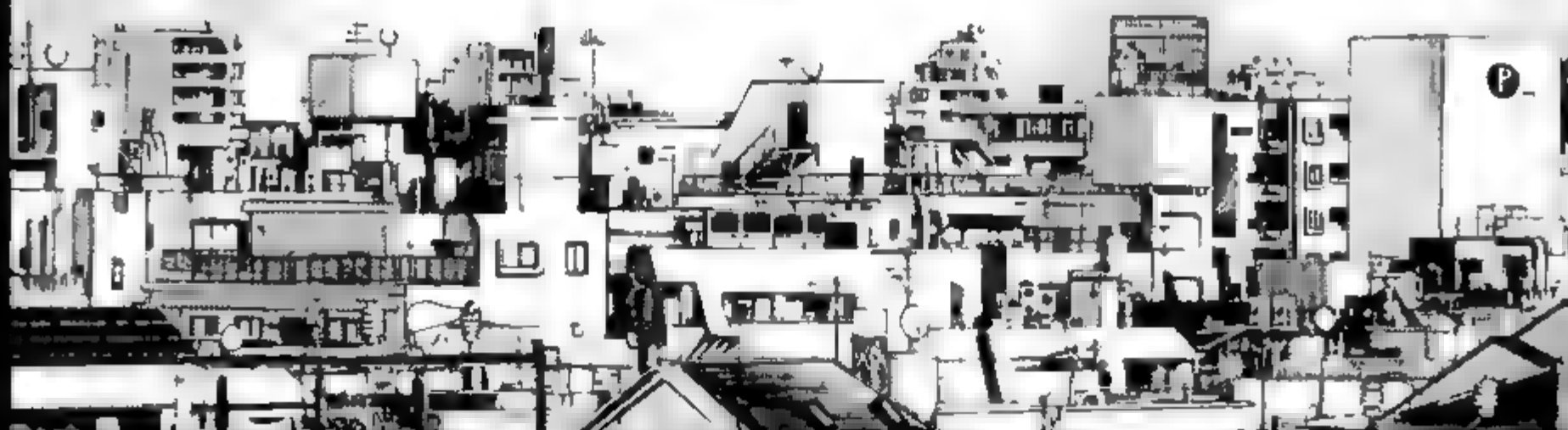


I
ABOUT
END TO
FAME

I TOOK TWO
WEEKS OFF WITH
THE LIE THAT
I WAS GOING
ABROAD.

...AND IN
TEN DAYS,
HER VERY
EXISTENCE
FELT LIKE AN
ILLUSION.

BUT IN A
COUPLE OF
DAYS, I STARTED
THINKING THAT
THE ABORTION
AND BEING KEPT
PRISONER WERE
ALL IN HER
IMAGINATION...



EITHER
WAY, I
CHOSE THE
INCONSE-
QUENTIAL
LIFE.



Umm...

IN A
WAY, IT
WAS A
RELIEF.



...DO
YOU WANT
TO GET
MARRIED?





FIRST OFF,
THIS LARGE
CELADON POT
HAS BEEN
GETTING A
LOT OF PRAISE
AT OPEN
EXHIBITIONS.

UMM,
SO LET'S
BEGIN OUR
INTERVIEW
...

MR. WASHIO,
MY NAME
IS NARUSE,
AN EDITOR
FROM LIVING
WITH BEAUTY
MONTHLY.

THE
TENDENCY IN
CONTEMPORARY
POTTERY HAS
BEEN TOWARDS
THE AVANT-
GARDE, BUT YOUR
WORK IS A BOLT
OUT OF THE BLUE.
AND AT JUST 25
YEARS OLD...

...DIDN'T
LAST.

BUT THAT
FEELING...



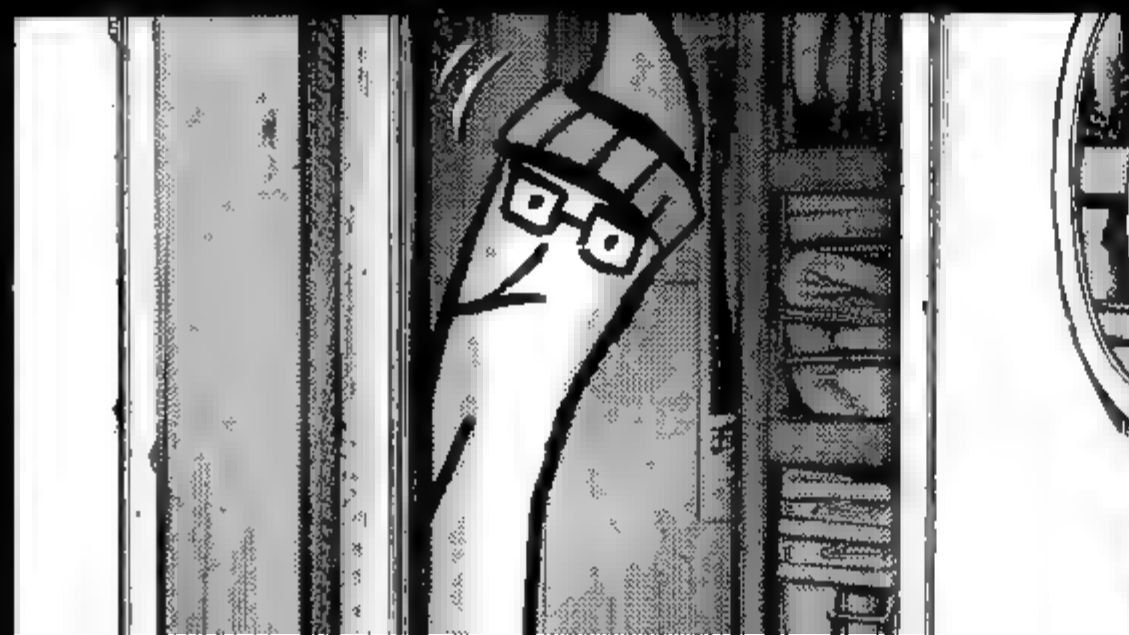
...
...
...



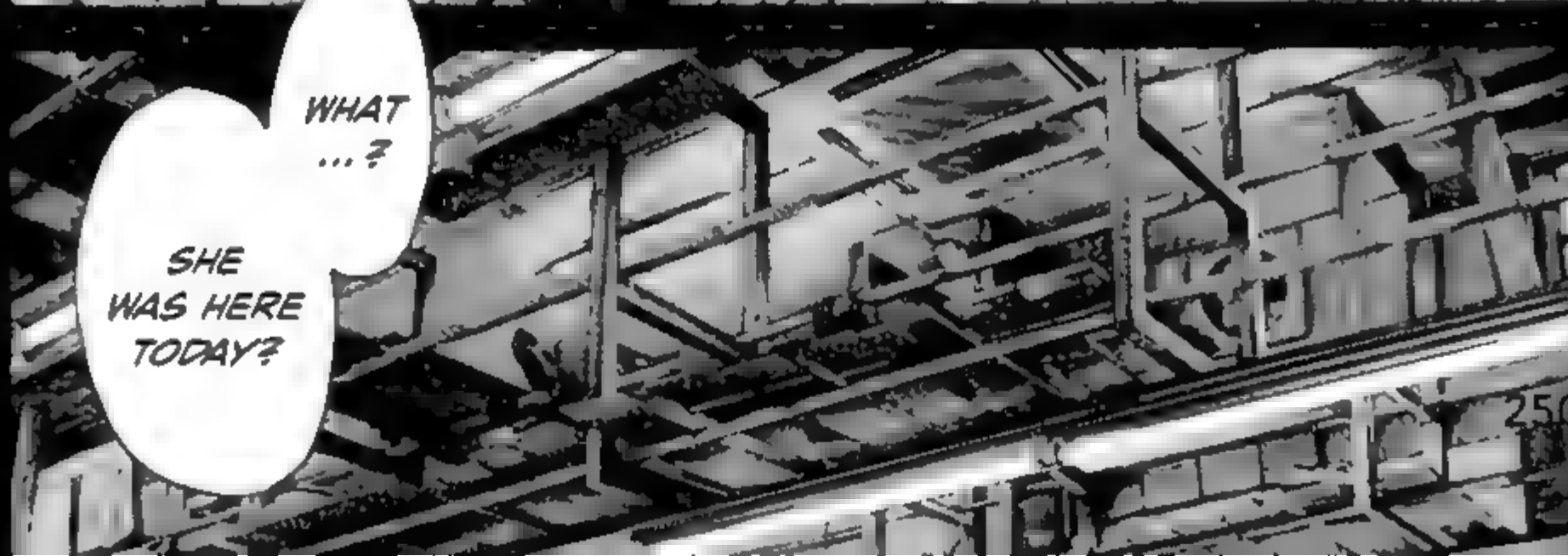
UMMMM
...

...
HUH?

MR.
WASHIO?









NEVER
MIND
THAT, MR.
ONODERA.


WOULD
YOU LIKE
TO GO
OUT FOR
DINNER,
JUST THE
TWO OF
US?

THERE'S
A LOVELY
FUSION
RESTAURANT
THAT JUST
OPENED IN
JIYUGAOKA.

MRS.
YAGI...

I'M
SORRY
...

...WAY MAYBE
OFF BASE I'M...
HERE, BUT...



...DO
YOU...

...KEEP
YOUR
DAUGHTER
LOCKED
UP IN
YOUR
HOUSE?

SHE TRAINED
FOR OVER TEN
YEARS AT FRENCH
RESTAURANTS ALL
OVER THE WORLD,
SO IT'S GUARANTEED
TO BE DELICIOUS.

MY FRIEND
FROM HIGH
SCHOOL
OPENED IT.
IT'S
ALWAYS
BEEN HER
DREAM.



WASHIO?



ARE YOU
TYING
UP YOUR
DAUGHTER
AND
KEEPING
HER
PRISONER?

JUST
ANSWER
THE
QUES-
TION...



I'M
SURE
YOU'LL
LOVE IT
TOO.

THE
SMELL OF
THE STEW
AND THE
TENDERNESS
OF THE MEAT
IS JUST...!

AHHH,
WELL...!



... THE
QUESTION.

ANSWER
...





OH
NOO!

A
H
H
H
H
H
H

**N
N
M
A
R
G
H
!!**

W-
WASHIO!

OW
!!

WHAT
ARE
YOU
DOING?

OW,
OUCH!

MRS.
YAGI...

HANG IN
THERE,
MRS.
YAGI!

YES,
HELLO ...
WE
NEED
AN
AMBU-
LANCE!

...A
POLICE-
MAN!

GO
FIND
...

YUICHI!







THE
HELL
WITH
THIS
!!



DID
YOU...

...MAKE
HIM DO
IT?



IT
WAS LOVE
AT FIRST
SIGHT,
APPARENTLY.

I
FELT...

...A
SHIVER
RUN
DOWN MY
SPINE
AT HER
SMILE...

...SO
BEAUTIFUL
IT WAS
ALMOST
SCARY.



WELL,
WASHIO
SAID...

...HE
WOULD DO
ANYTHING
FOR ME.

HEE
HEE

...

HOW IS
THAT EVEN A
THING, WHEN
YOU DON'T
KNOW ANY-
THING ABOUT
THE OTHER
PERSON?



I
JUST GAVE
HIM A LITTLE
HEAD, AND
SUDDENLY HE
WANTED TO
DO IT.

HE
HESITATED
AT FIRST...

...BUT
MEN
ARE SO
EASY.

HOW
FUNNY!

BUT...

I
NEVER...

...IT'S
HUMAN
NATURE TO
MINDLESSLY
PURSUE
BEAUTY...

...SHOULD
HAVE
TOUCHED
HER...

...AND
TO BE
FOVED
WITH...



...AND TO
DESTROY.



EHHHN ...

UHHN ...

W-WASHIO ...!



HEY, STOP...

IT'S DANGEROUS!

YOU CAN'T OPEN THE KILN WHEN IT'S ON!

W-WASHIO ...!







BUT
IT'S...

I
DON'T
KNOW.

NO
NEED TO
WORRY
ABOUT
ME.

...NONE
OF YOUR
BUSINESS.

GOD
ALWAYS

...

...WATCHES
OVER ME.



THAT
GOTT

THAT'S
HOW I
THOUGHT...



I WANTED
TO KNOW
ABOUT HER
GOD.

...WHETHER
GOD EXISTS
OR NOT.

AND I
DIDN'T
MEAN...



MAYBE
HUMAN
NATURE
WOULD MAKE
US CLING TO
IT ANYWAY.

LET'S SAY
THE ENTITY
WE CALL
GOD TURNS
OUT TO BE A
DEMON.



...SEEMED
JUST A
LITTLE
MORE
DISTORTED
THAN
USUAL.

AS SOON
AS THAT
THOUGHT
CROSSED
MY MIND,
THE SCENE
BEFORE
ME...



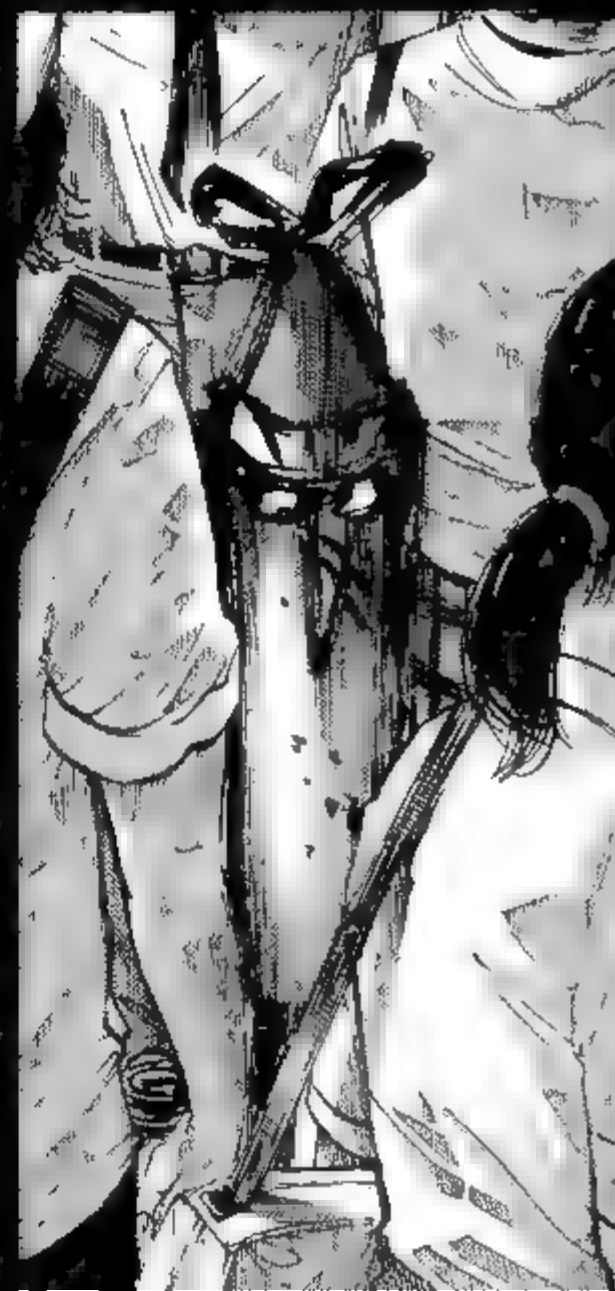
...I
FINALLY
REALIZED
THAT...

WATCHING
HER
DISAPPEAR
INTO THE
CROWD...



...THE
MOMENT
I MET
HER...

...I HAD
FALLEN
IN LOVE
WITH HER.



...SHE'D
RETURN TO
ME FROM THE
DEPTHS OF THE
CROWD.

IT
FELT LIKE
IF I CALLED
HER NAME...



...I
NEVER
KNEW HER
NAME.

BUT...

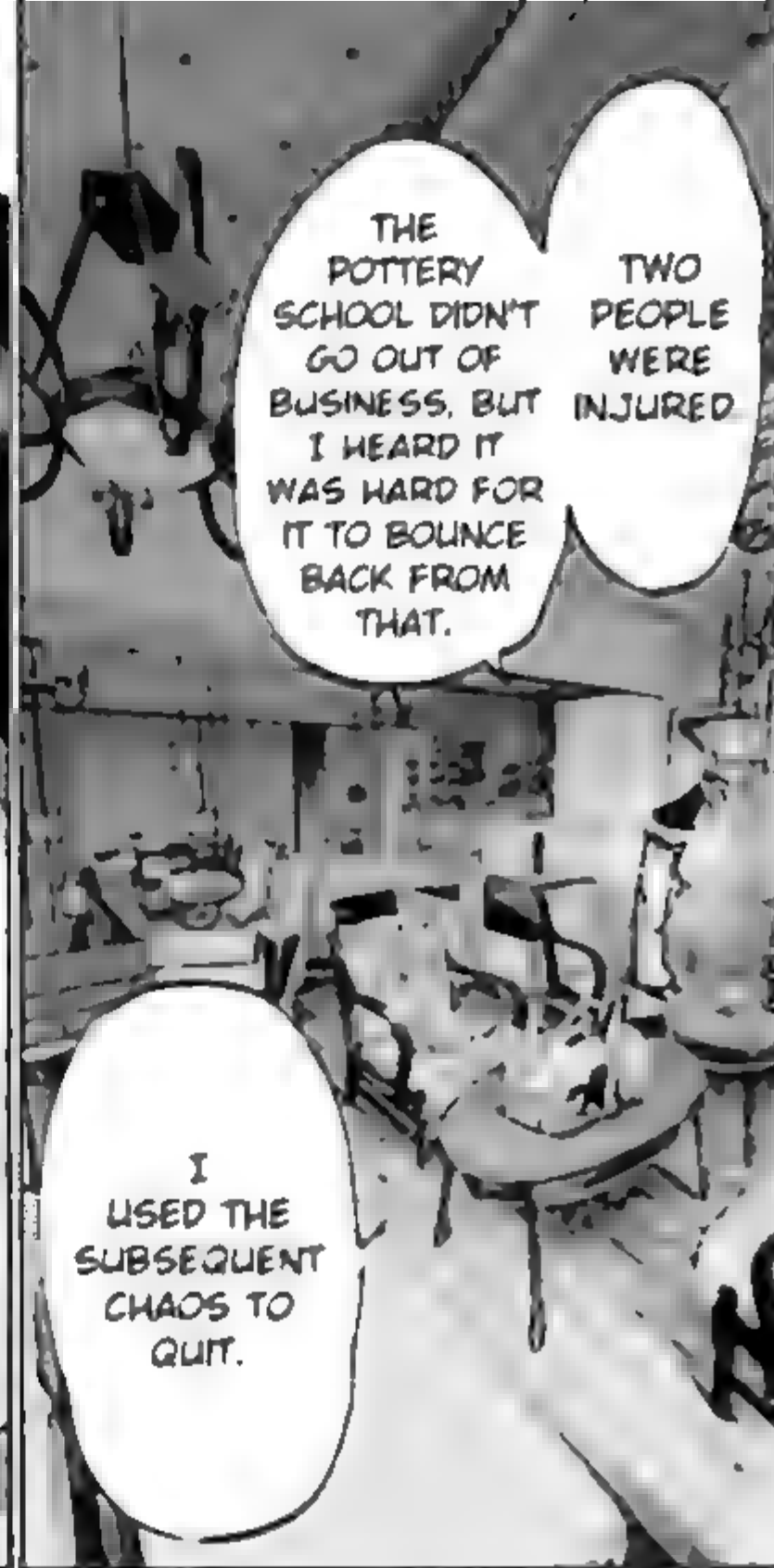




IT'S
BEEN
FIVE
YEARS
...

THINGS
WENT SOUR
WITH MY
GIRLFRIEND
AFTER THAT,
AND WE
BROKE UP.

I'VE
LIVED
WITHOUT
HELP,
WITHOUT
BELIEFS...
WITHOUT
THINKING.



THE
POTTERY
SCHOOL DIDN'T
GO OUT OF
BUSINESS, BUT
I HEARD IT
WAS HARD FOR
IT TO BOUNCE
BACK FROM
THAT.

TWO
PEOPLE
WERE
INJURED

I
USED THE
SUBSEQUENT
CHAOS TO
QUIT.



WHAT
REASON
IS THERE
TO GO ON
LIVING IN
LIGHT OF
THAT?

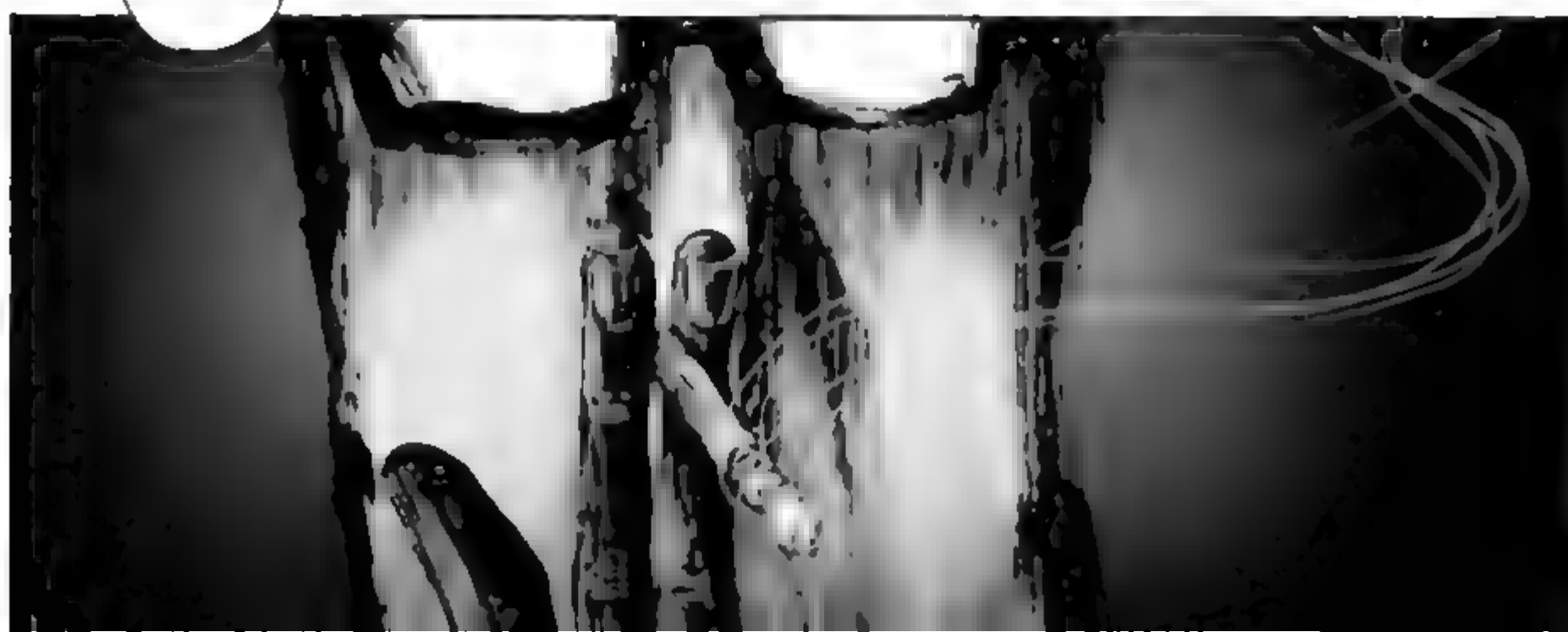
PEOPLE
PIERCING
EACH
OTHER
WITH THE
THORNS
OF THEIR
EGOS...

...JUST
DON'T
UNDER-
STAND.

I...



PEOPLE
ARE...





I
HATE

...
MYSELF.



I
LIKE
YOU

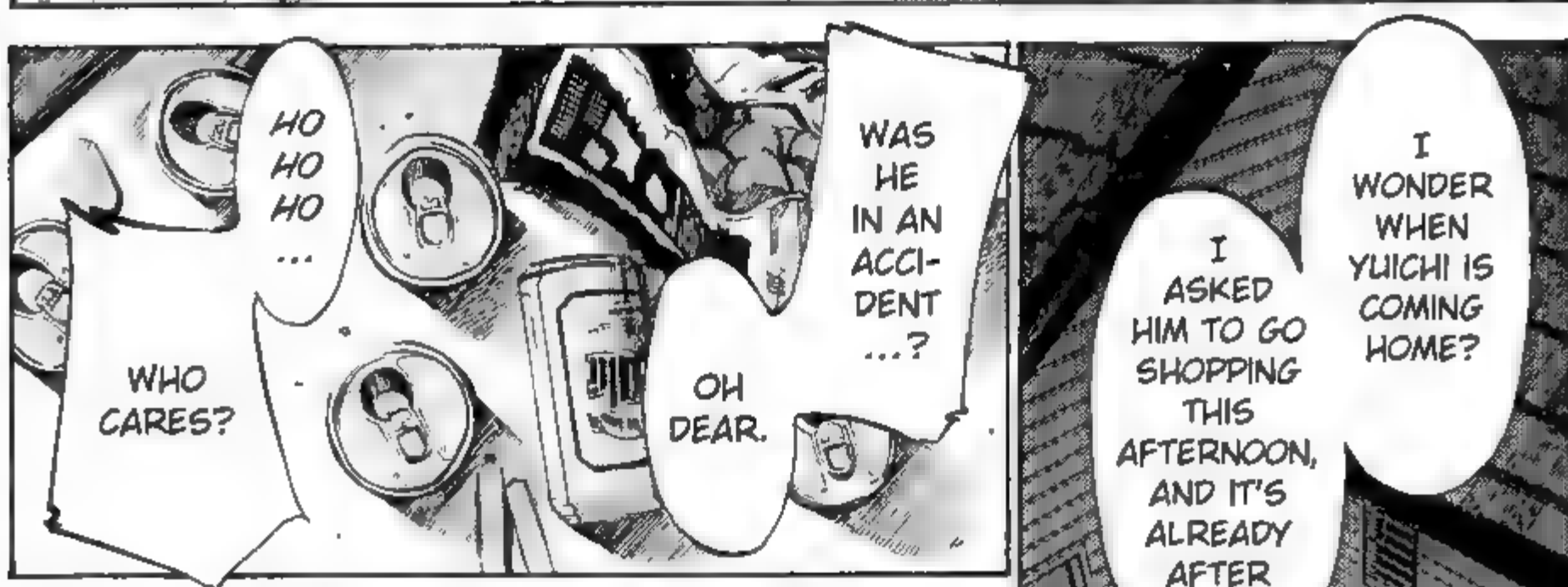
I
LIKE YOU,
YUICHI.

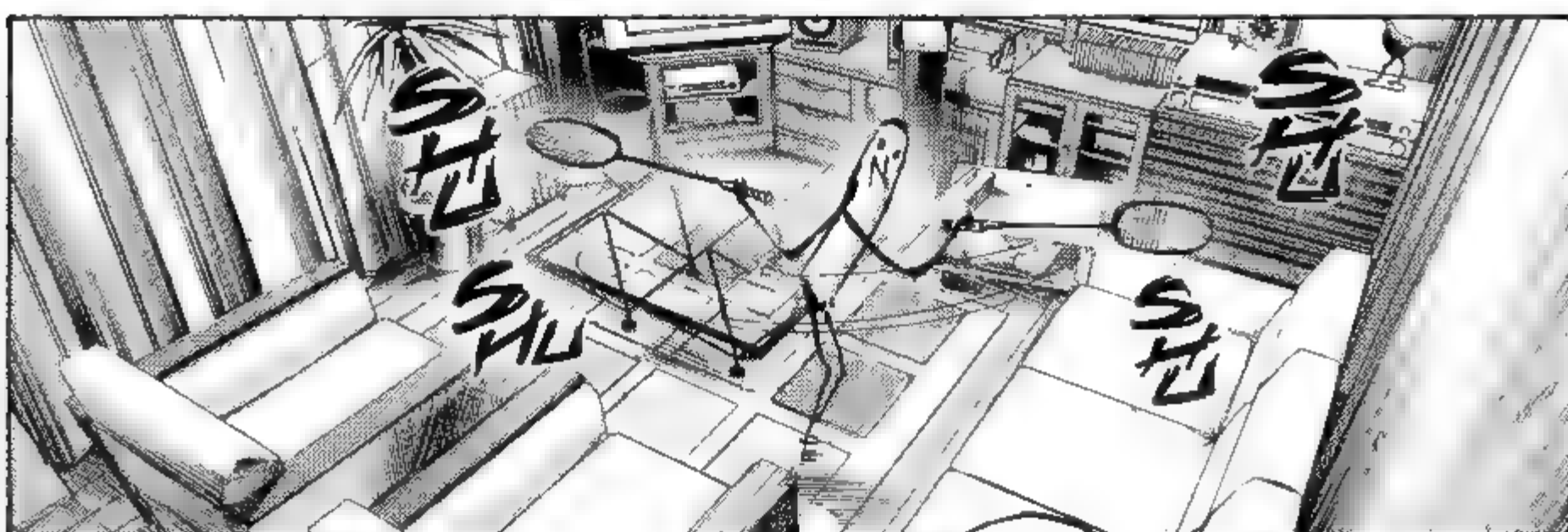


NO
MATTER
WHAT
HAPPENED
BACK
THEN

I LIKE
WHO YOU
ARE NOW.





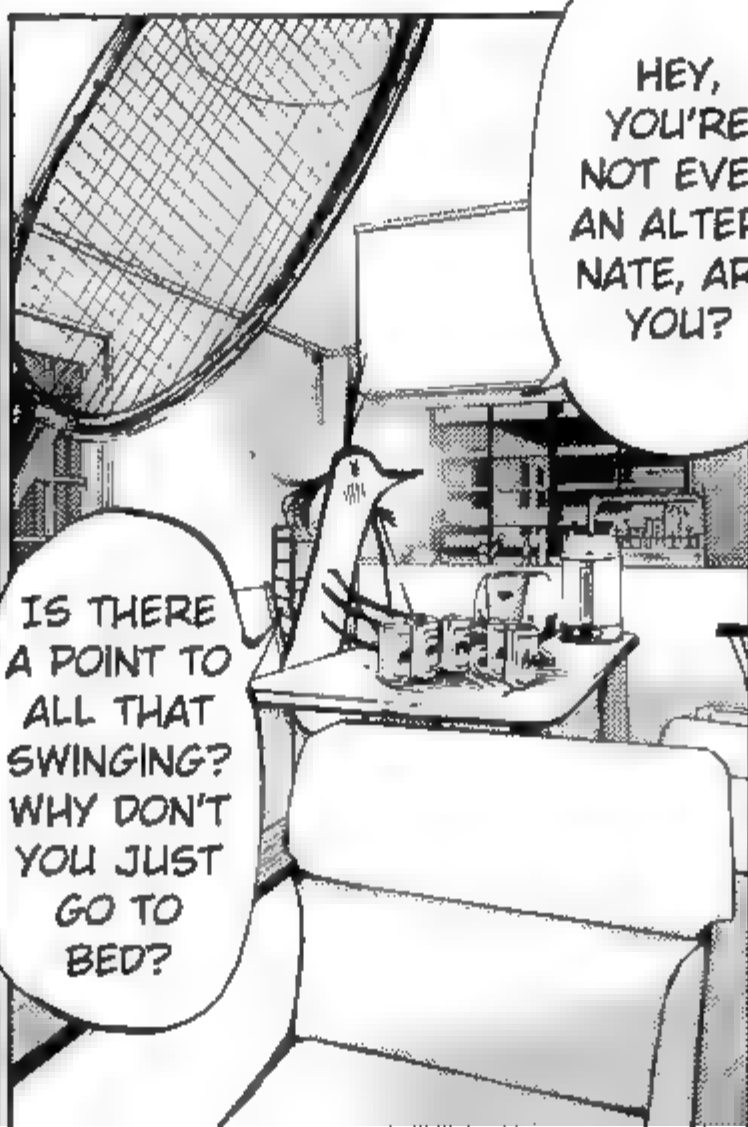


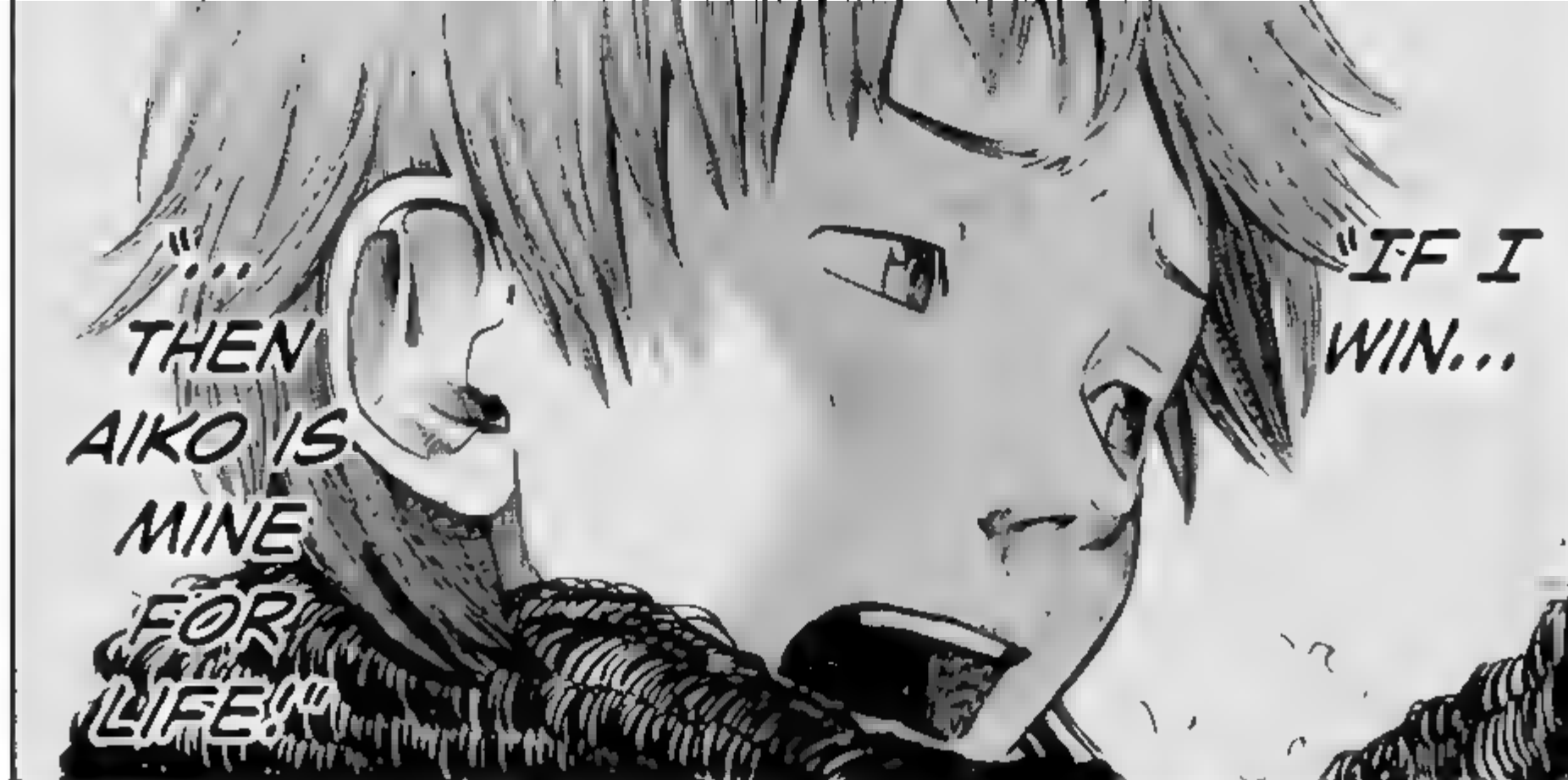
Punpun was aware of that, but something was bursting out of him, and he couldn't hold it back.

IS THERE A POINT TO ALL THAT SWINGING? WHY DON'T YOU JUST GO TO BED?

HEY, YOU'RE NOT EVEN AN ALTERNATE, ARE YOU?

Punpun was swinging away in preparation for the badminton tournament the next day.





“...
THEN
AIKO IS
MINE
FOR
LIFE!”

“IF I
WIN...”

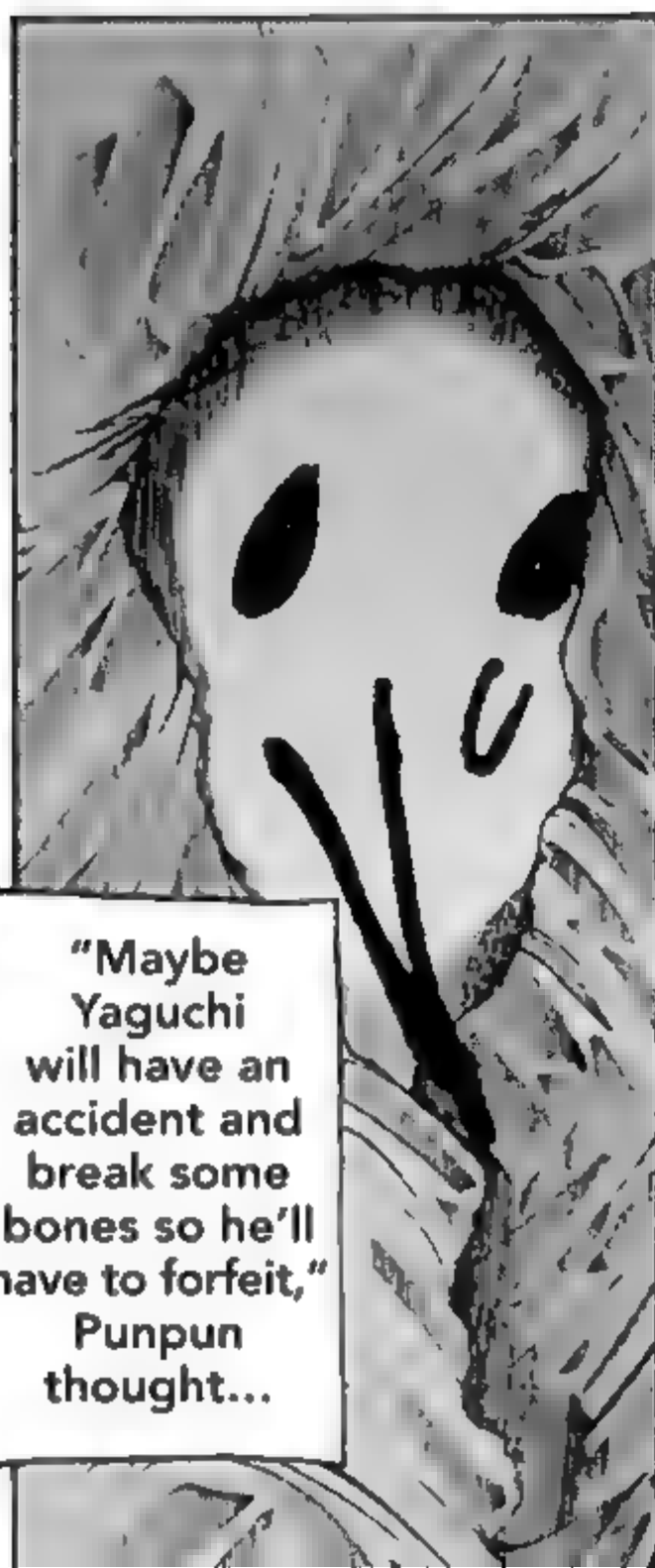
There was no way Punpun was going to hand Aiko over to someone who'd let a first-year curse him out!

“Yo, Yaguchi!”

“I’m going to call him names in my head!”

“What a selfish asshole!”

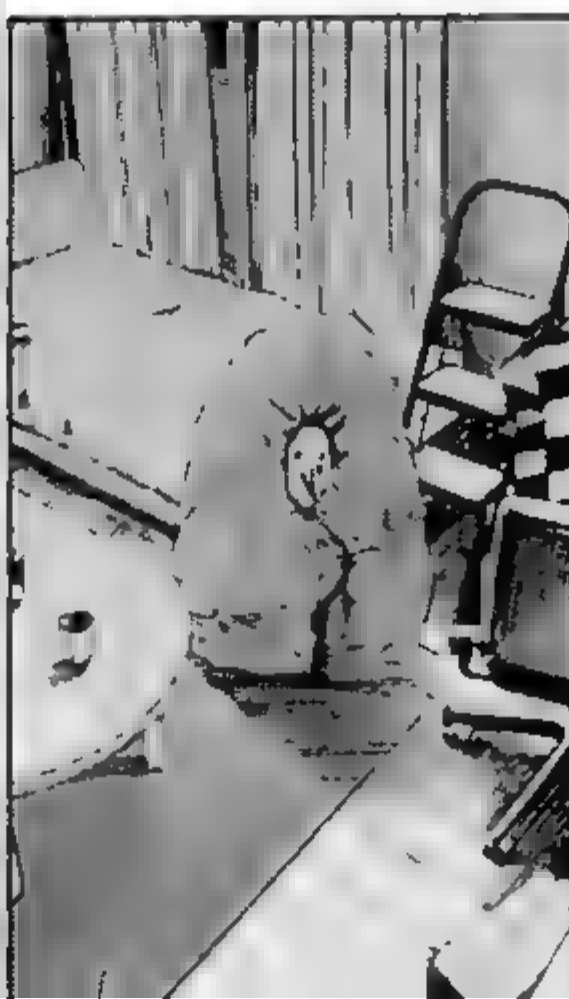
“For fuck’s sake!”



“Maybe Yaguchi will have an accident and break some bones so he’ll have to forfeit,” Punpun thought...



AH!



...Punpun actually didn’t have the foggiest idea what to do.

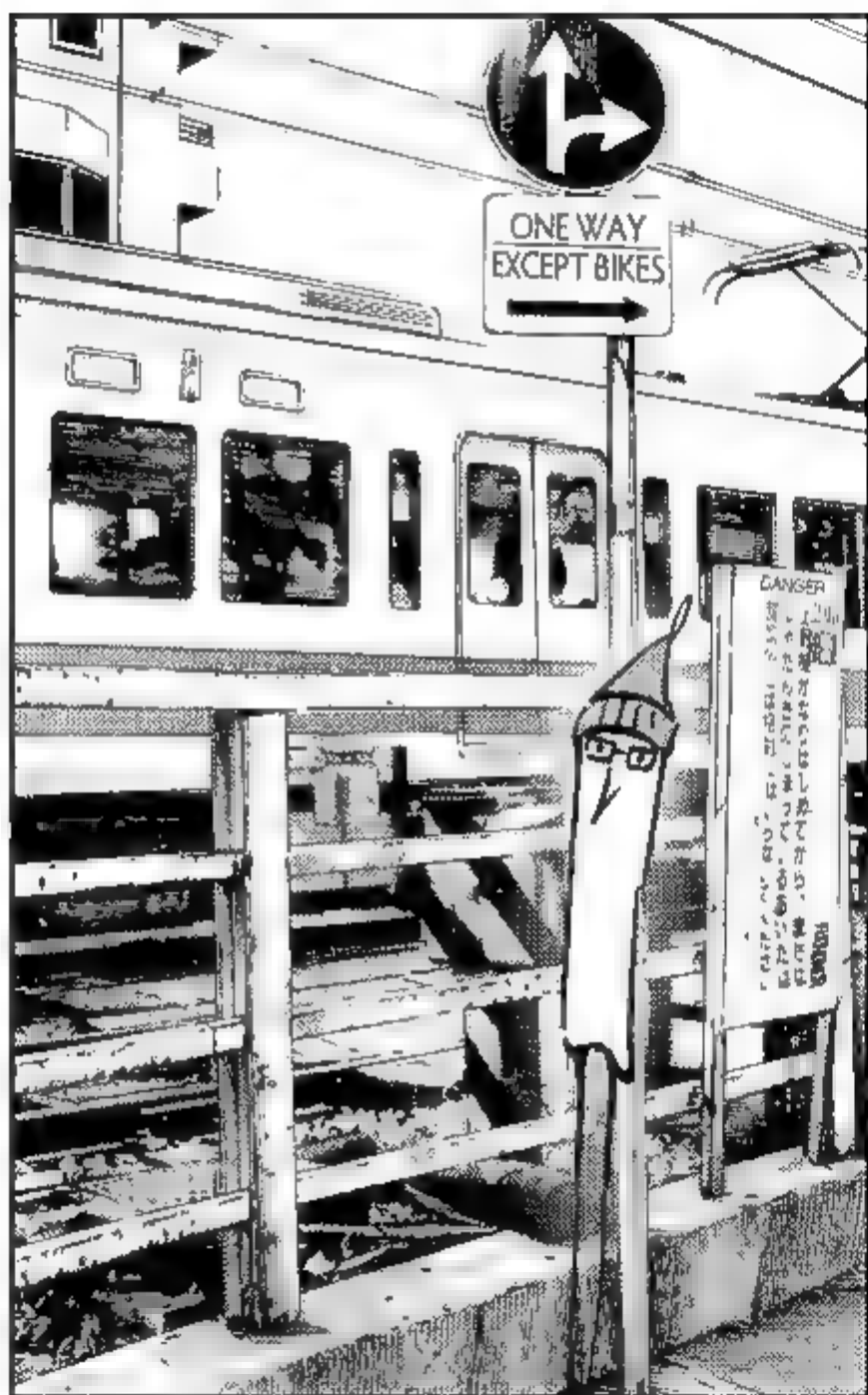
But...

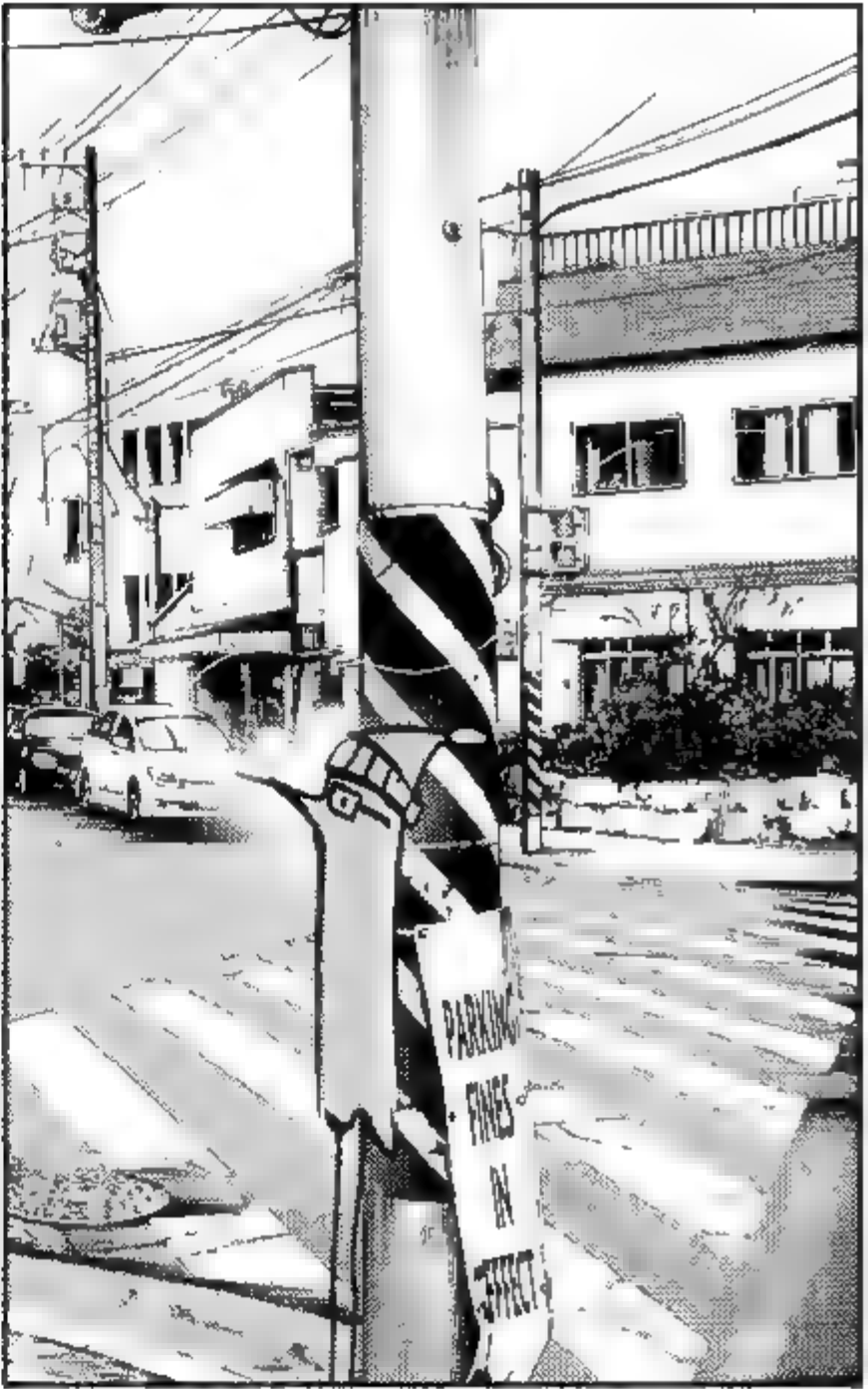


...so he
decided
to stop
thinking
about it.

And really,
that was just
too much...













HER INJURIES WEREN'T SERIOUS, BUT IF SHE HAD SUED, WE WOULDN'T BE AROUND ANYMORE.

BUT I HEARD MRS. YAGI'S DAUGHTER MADE HER STOP.



YEAH, WE WERE IN MEDIATION FOR A LONG TIME OVER THAT.

UM... WHAT ABOUT MRS. YAGI?



YOU REMEMBER, MRS. YAGI STARTED BRINGING HER RIGHT BEFORE IT HAPPENED ...

THE PALE GIRL WITH THE SHORT HAIR.

HUH?



...SOME OF THE STUDENTS MENTIONED THAT SHE'S STUDYING POTTERY AT AN ART COLLEGE IN KYOTO NOW.

OH YEAH...

I DON'T KNOW WHY SHE DEFENDED US.



HA HA, I SEE YOU HAVEN'T LOST YOUR TOUCH.



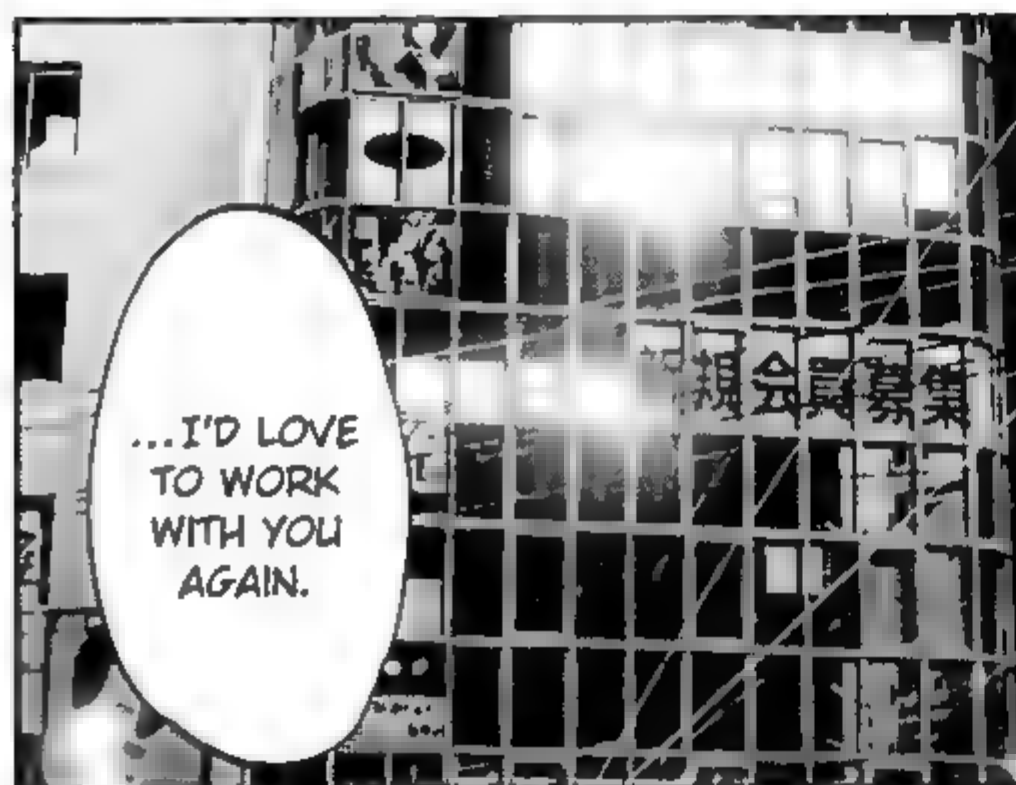
...SORRY
FOR
BARGING IN
ON YOU.

SO,
UM...



NO,
NO...

COME
ANY-
TIME.



...I'D LOVE
TO WORK
WITH YOU
AGAIN.



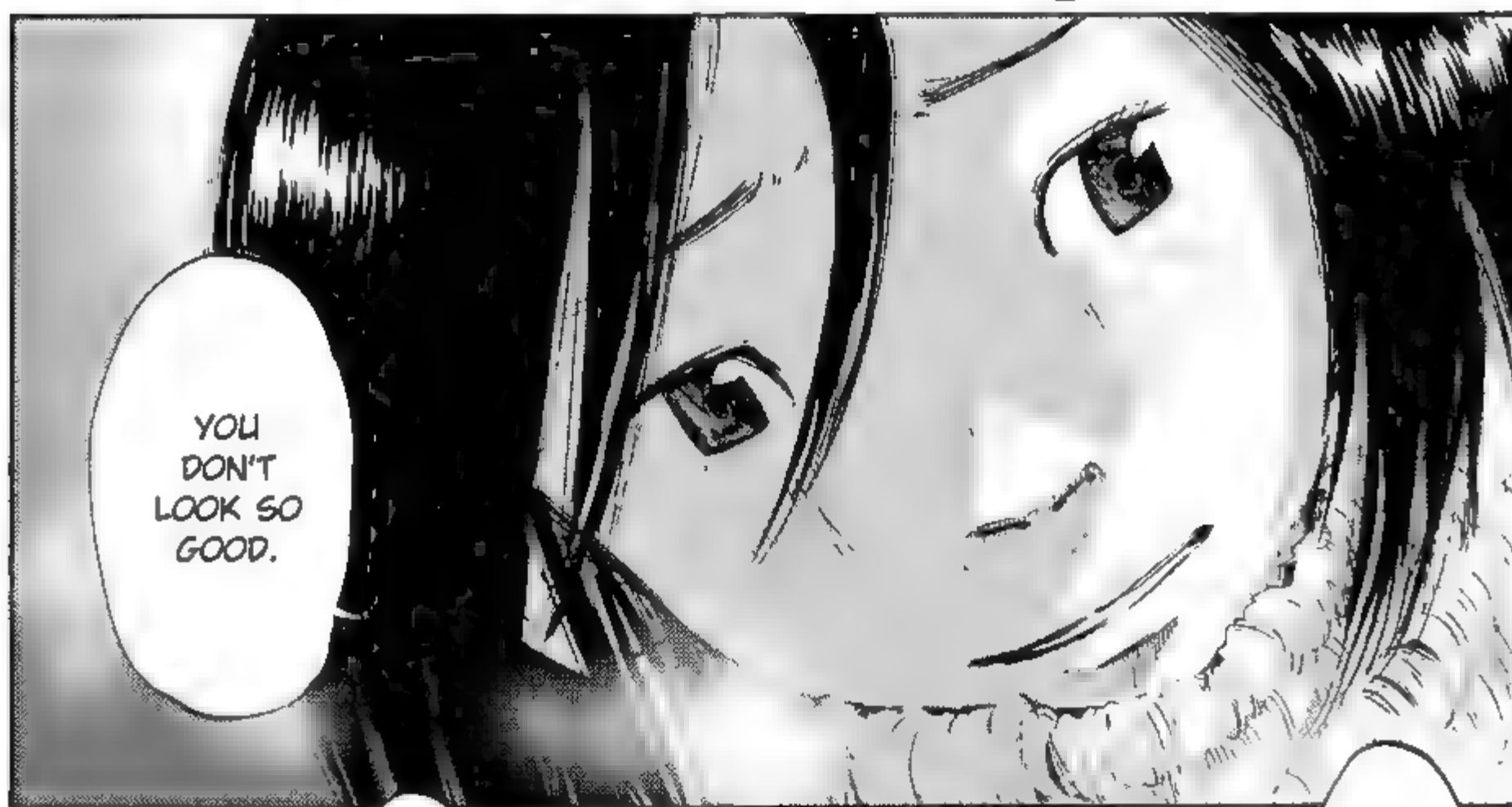
AND
...

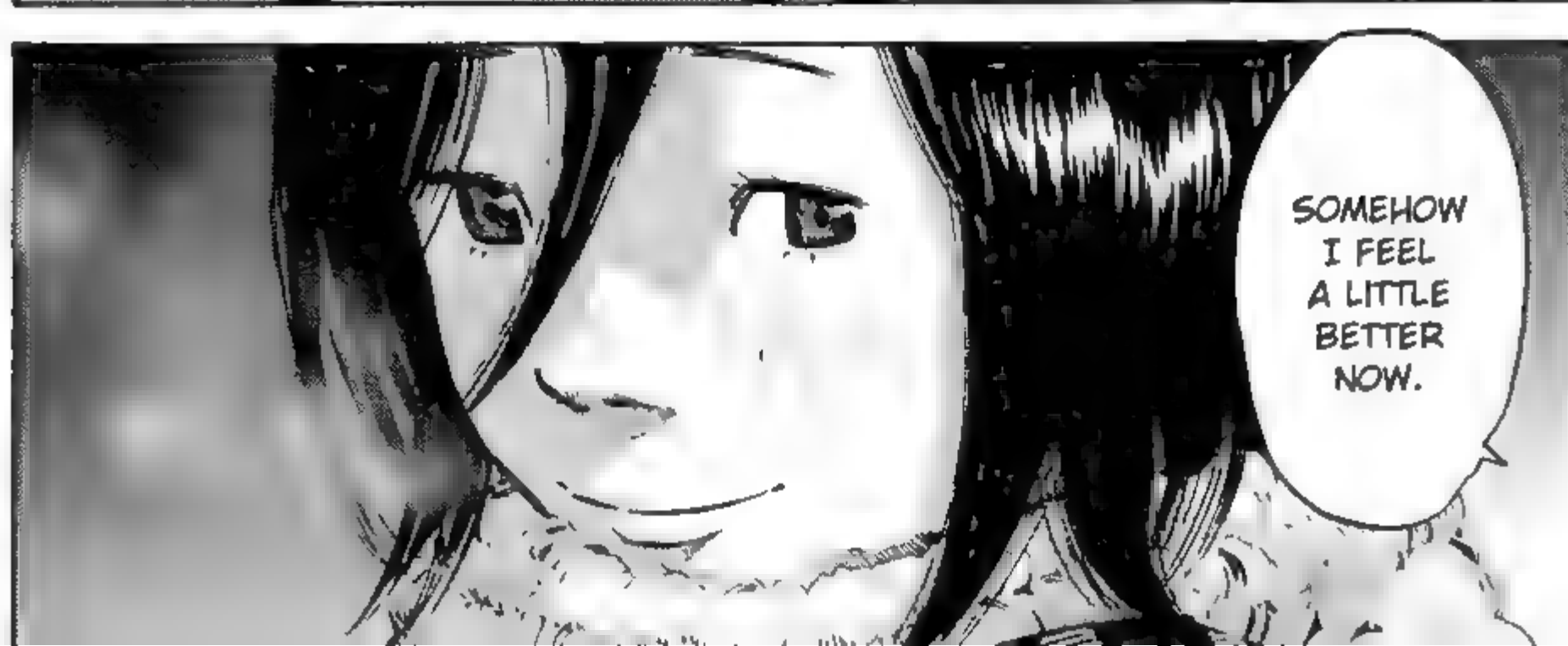
...IF
YOU WANT
TO GET
BACK INTO
POTTERY...











and
COMPLETELY
LIFE



BECAUSE
I
REALIZED





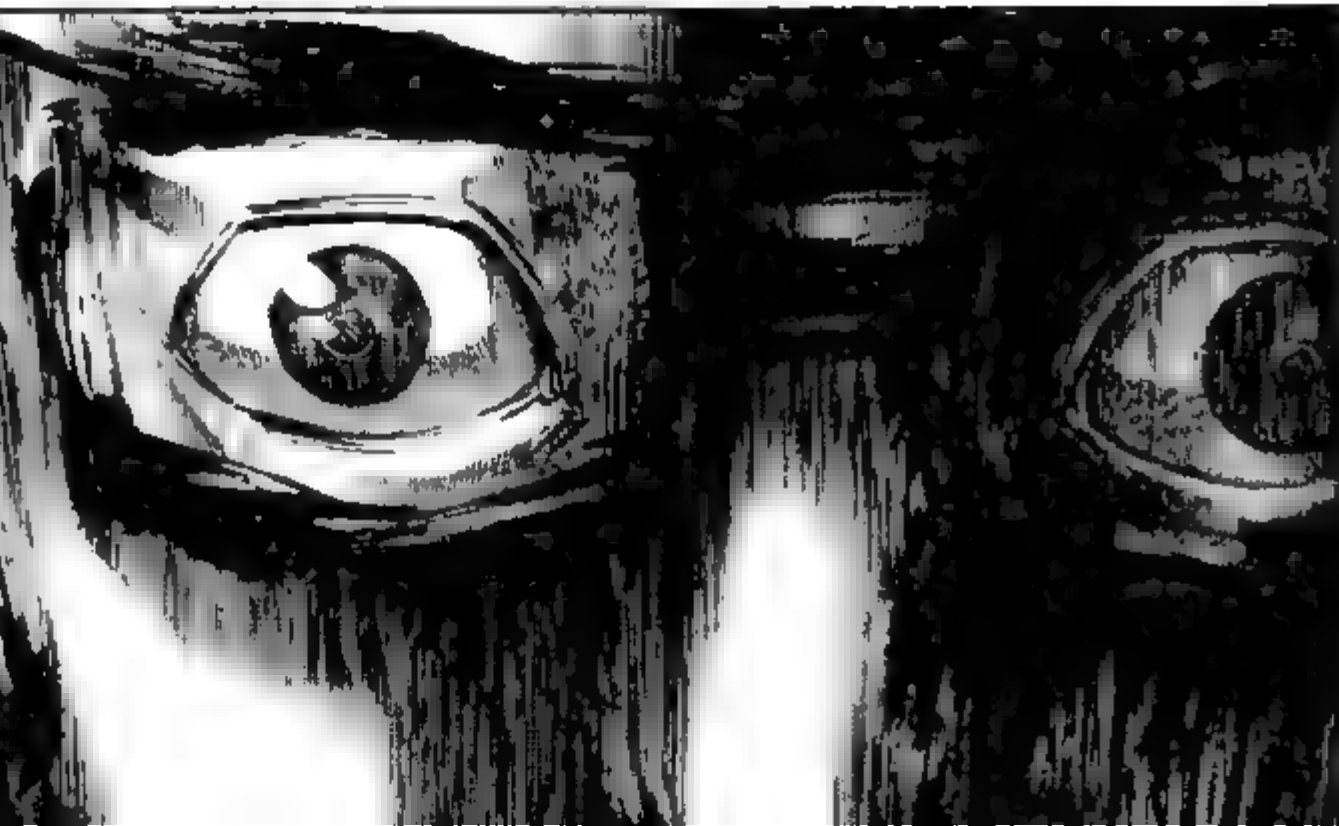
...THAT
MY GUILT
MAY HAVE
BEEN THE
ONE THING
KEEPING ME
ALIVE!

WHAT IF THE
VERY ACT OF
SEARCHING FOR
THE MEANING
OF LIFE IS MY
REASON FOR
LIVING?!

ALL ALONE,
WRITHING IN
AGONY FROM
THE CRIPPLING
GUILT...

UNABLE
TO MOVE
A MUSCLE
BECAUSE OF
TERRIFYING
GUILT...

BOONZ



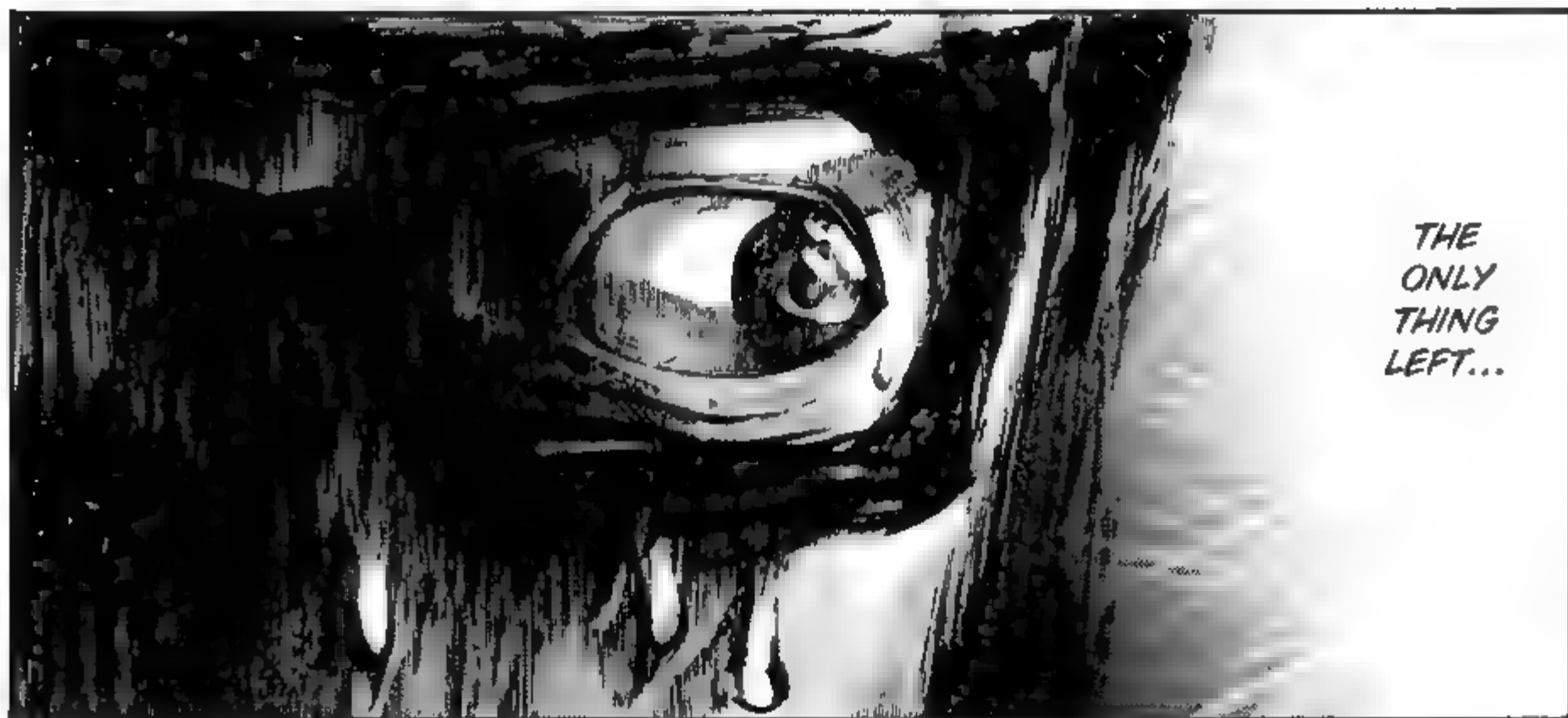


...THEN
I HAVE
NOTHING
LEFT.

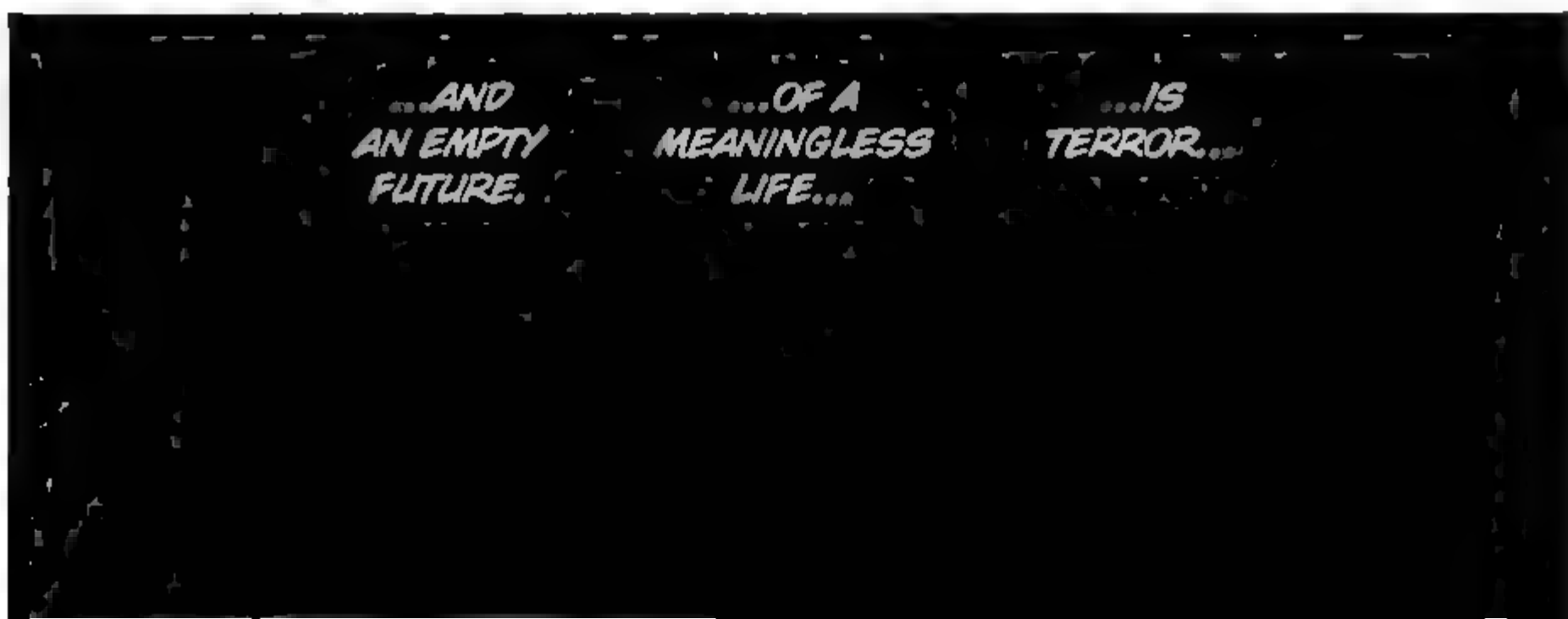
IF THAT'S
TRUE...



MY
PENANCE IS
COMPLETE.



THE
ONLY
THING
LEFT...

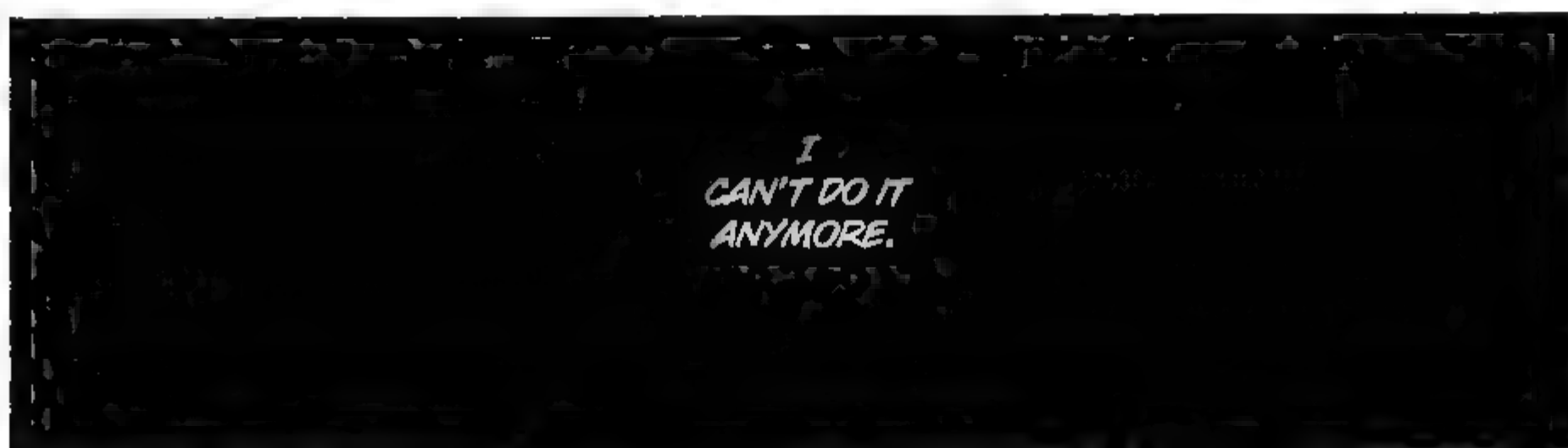


...AND
AN EMPTY
FUTURE.

...OF A
MEANINGLESS
LIFE...

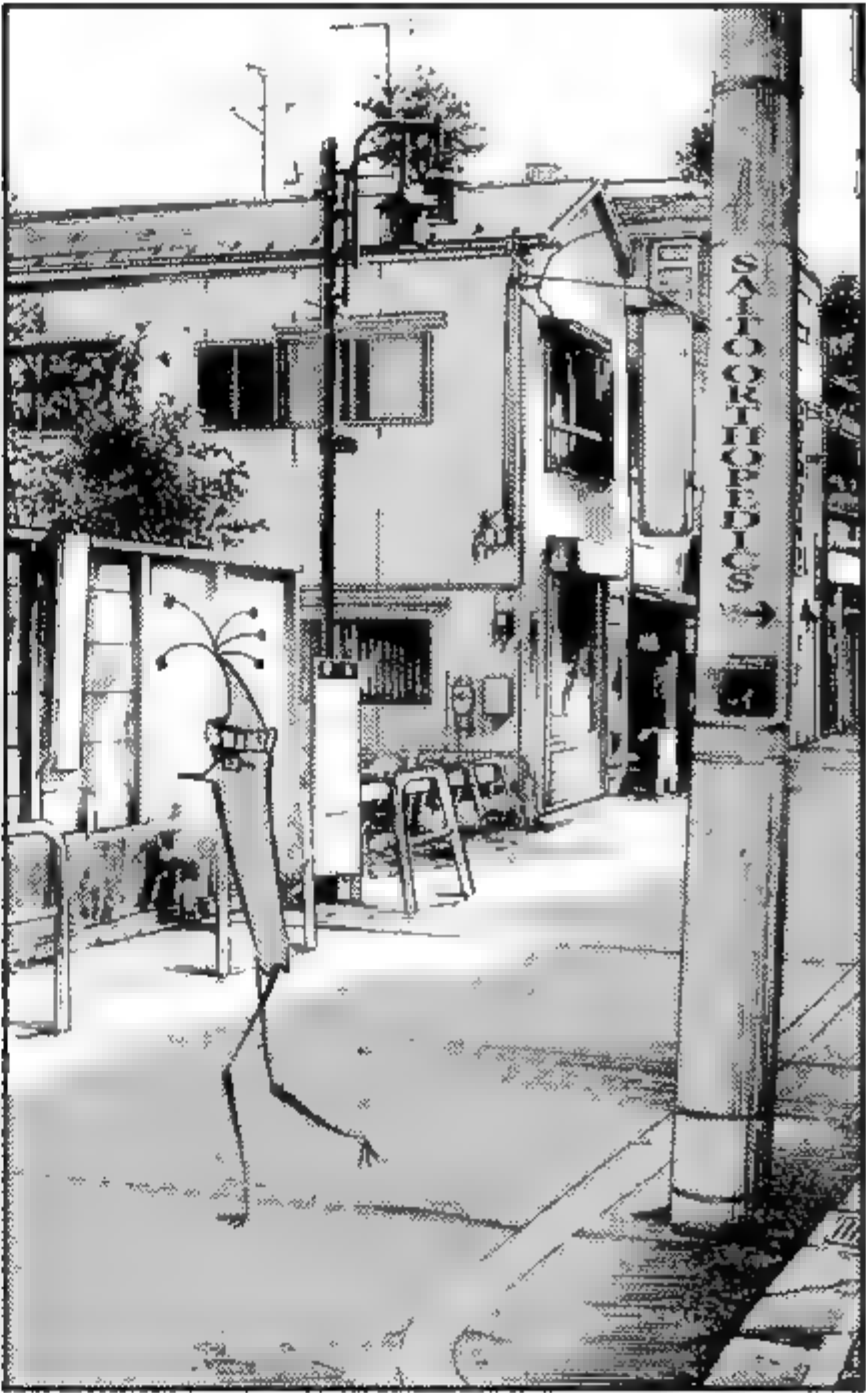
...IS
TERROR...

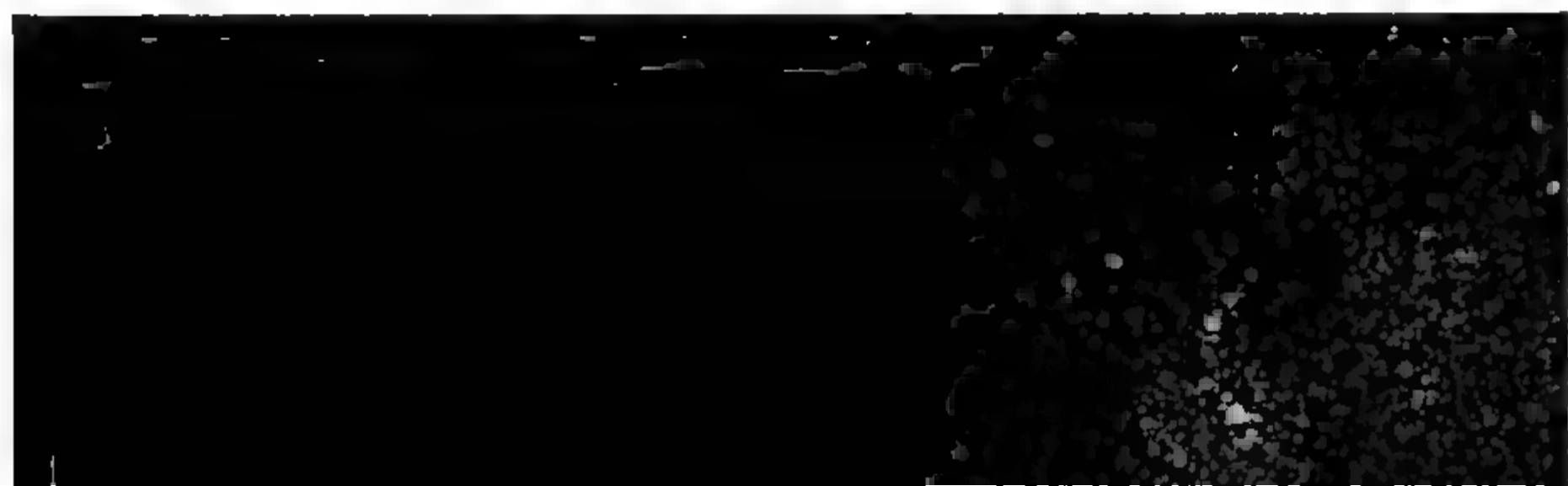




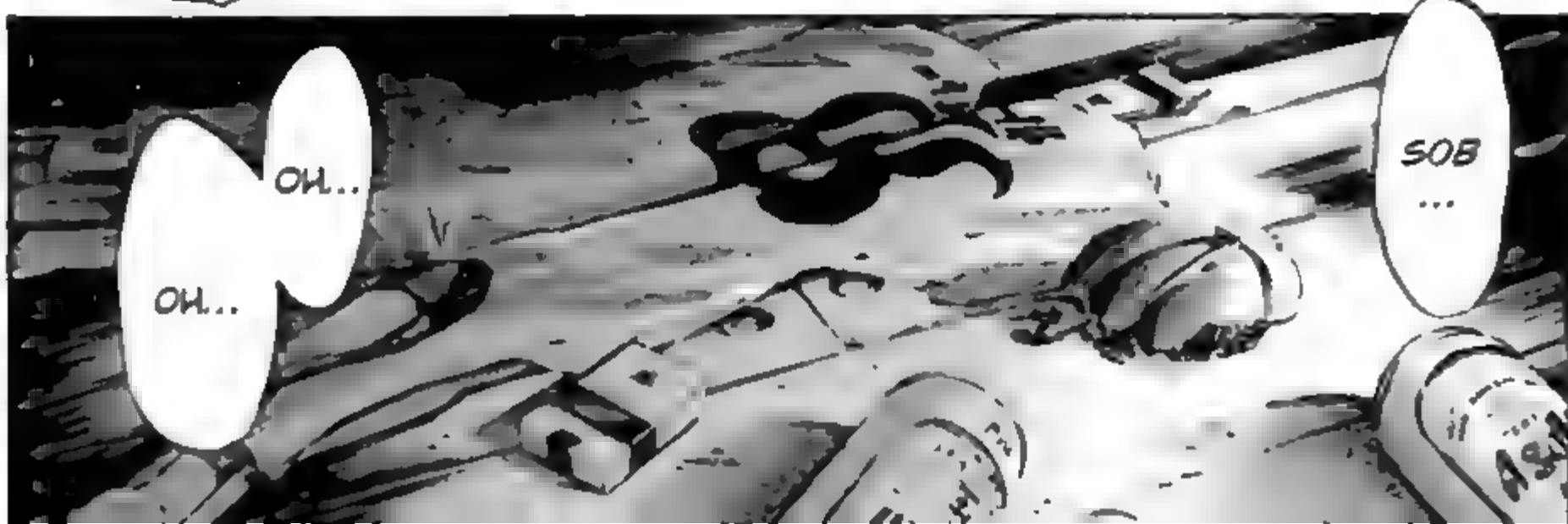
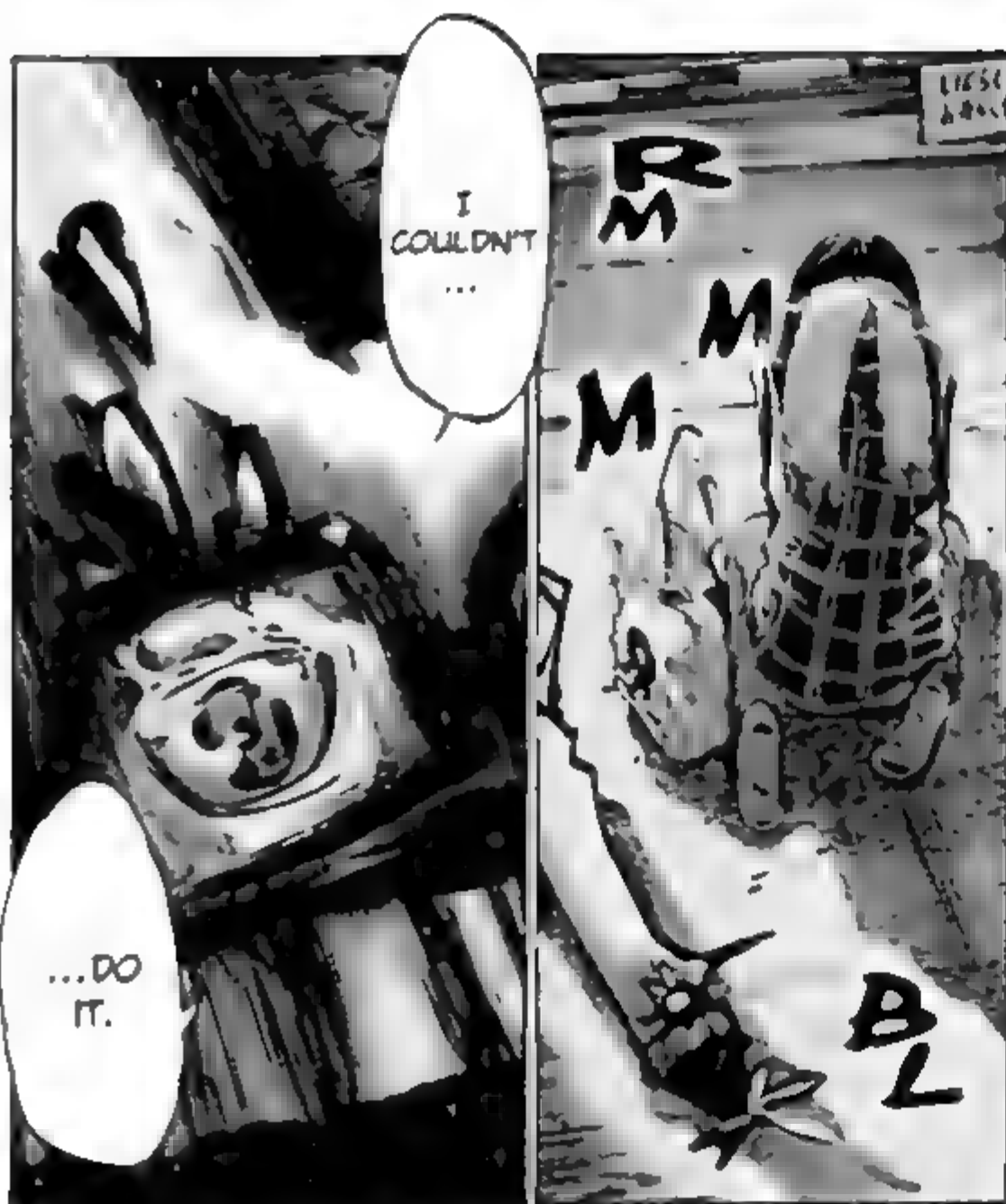




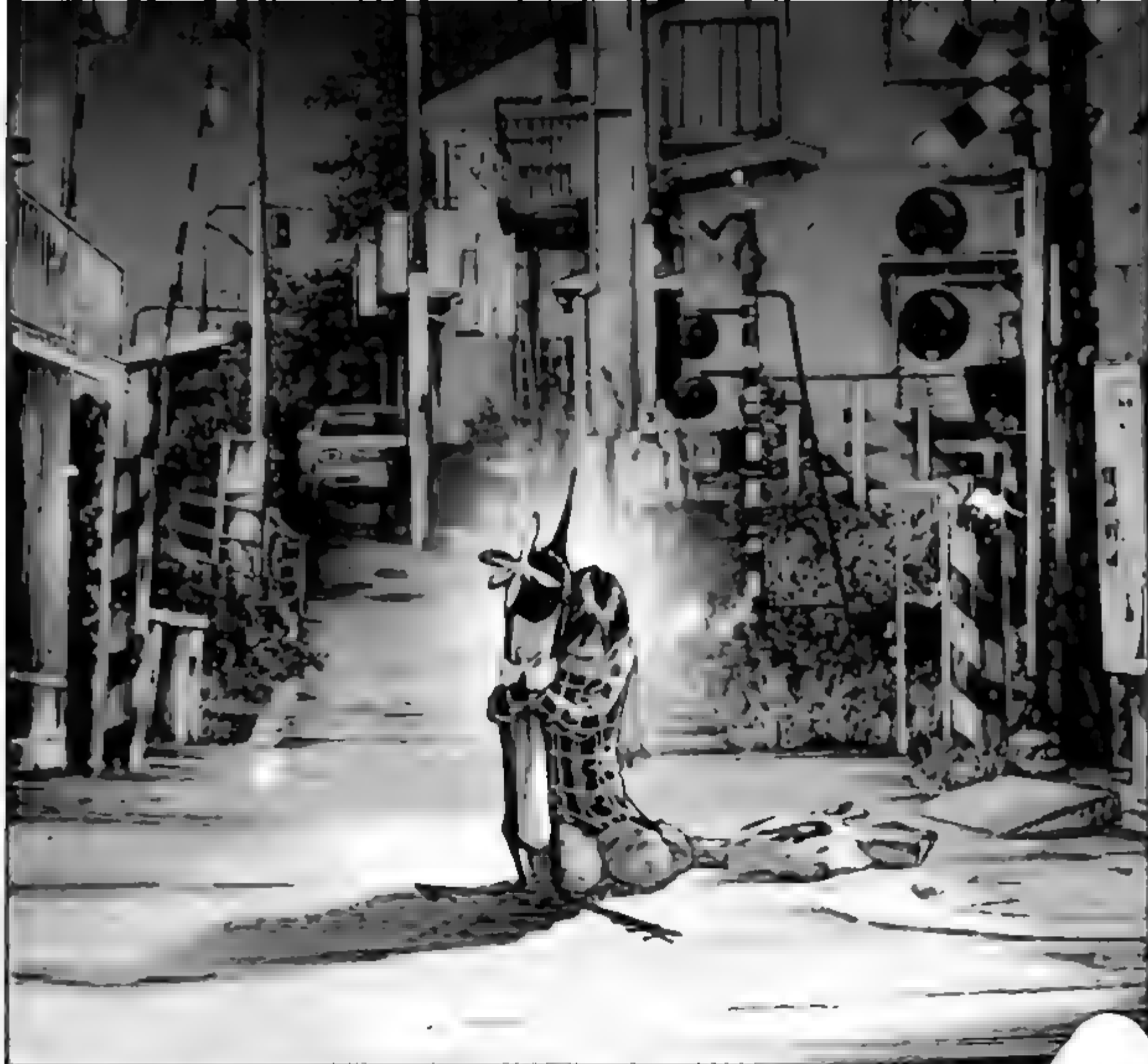












...LEAVE
ME
AGAIN.

JUST
DON'T
EVER...



...
WHAT...
WHAT
IF...

B-
BUT...



IT'S
OKAY...

I'LL DO
WHATEVER
YOU WANT,
YUICHI.



...I
WANT
YOU...

...TO
KILL
ME.



IF THAT
HAPPENS
...



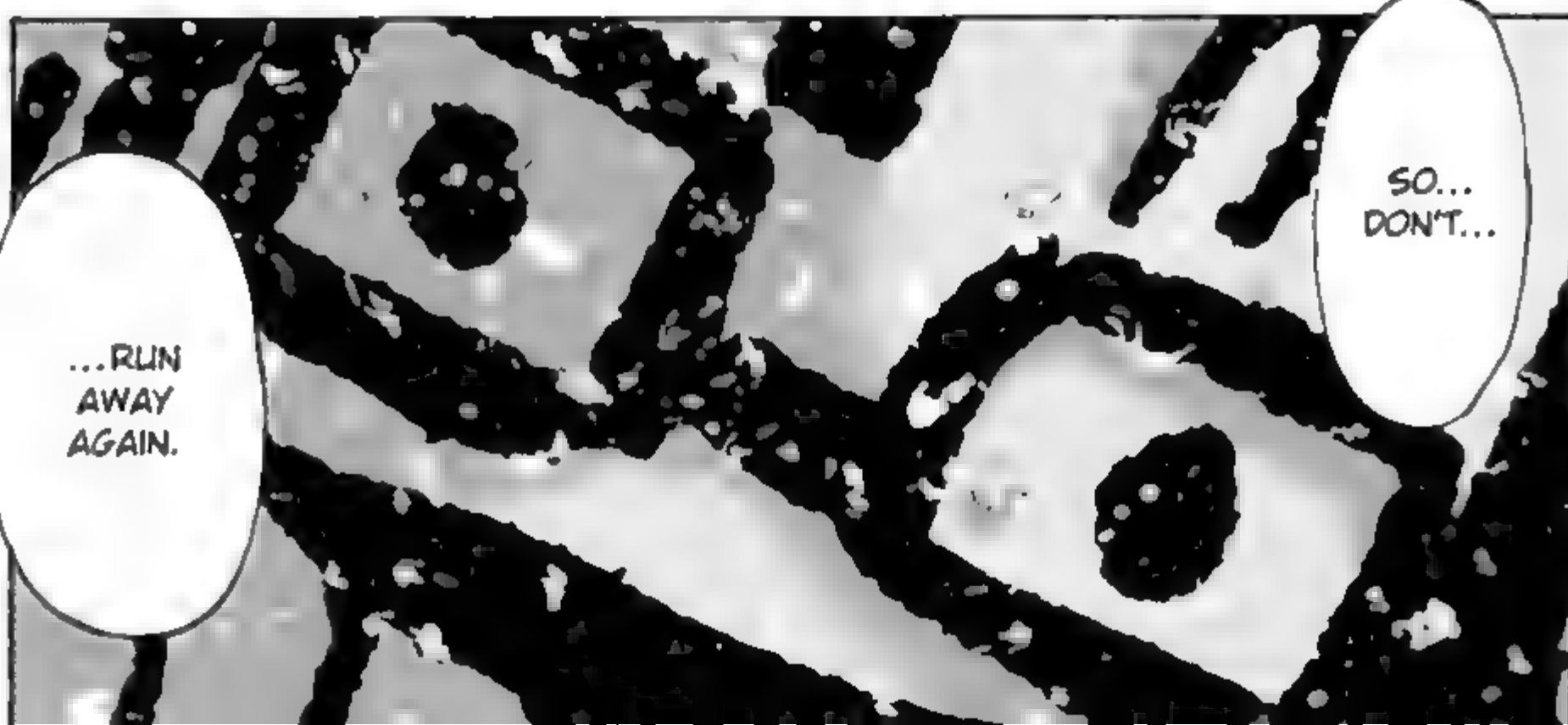
...I MAKE
ANOTHER
TERRIBLE
MISTAKE
THAT
CAN'T BE
FIXED...

...AND
I HURT
YOU?



DON'T
WORRY...

...IF THAT
HAPPENS,
I WILL
DEFINITELY
KILL YOU.



SO...
DON'T...

...RUN
AWAY
AGAIN.







THERN PREFECTURE BADMINTON TOURNA



I'VE NEVER SEEN A MATCH LIKE THAT.

HIS OPPONENT STARTED CRYING IN THE SECOND SET...



DID YOU SEE KOMATSU'S MATCH THIS MORNING?



YAGUCHI IS THE ONLY OTHER ONE LEFT FROM OUR SCHOOL.



IT WAS WICKED. SERIOUSLY, NO ONE CAN BEAT HIM.



I HEAR HE MADE THE IBARAKI PREFECTURE TEAM IN HIS FIRST YEAR AT HIS LAST SCHOOL.

AHA HA, BUT IF BY SOME MIRACLE HE WINS, HE'LL FACE KOMATSU IN THE FINAL.

WHO'S HE UP AGAINST NEXT...?

OH, IT'S MUSHANOKOJI, WHO JUST TRANSFERRED TO NISHI MIDDLE SCHOOL.



POOR YAGUCHI ...

...HE'S DONE FOR.



...of
calm
and
cool-
ness.

Punpun's
heart
was a
dark
lord...

...
damn
it...

No
need
to
worry

What
...?

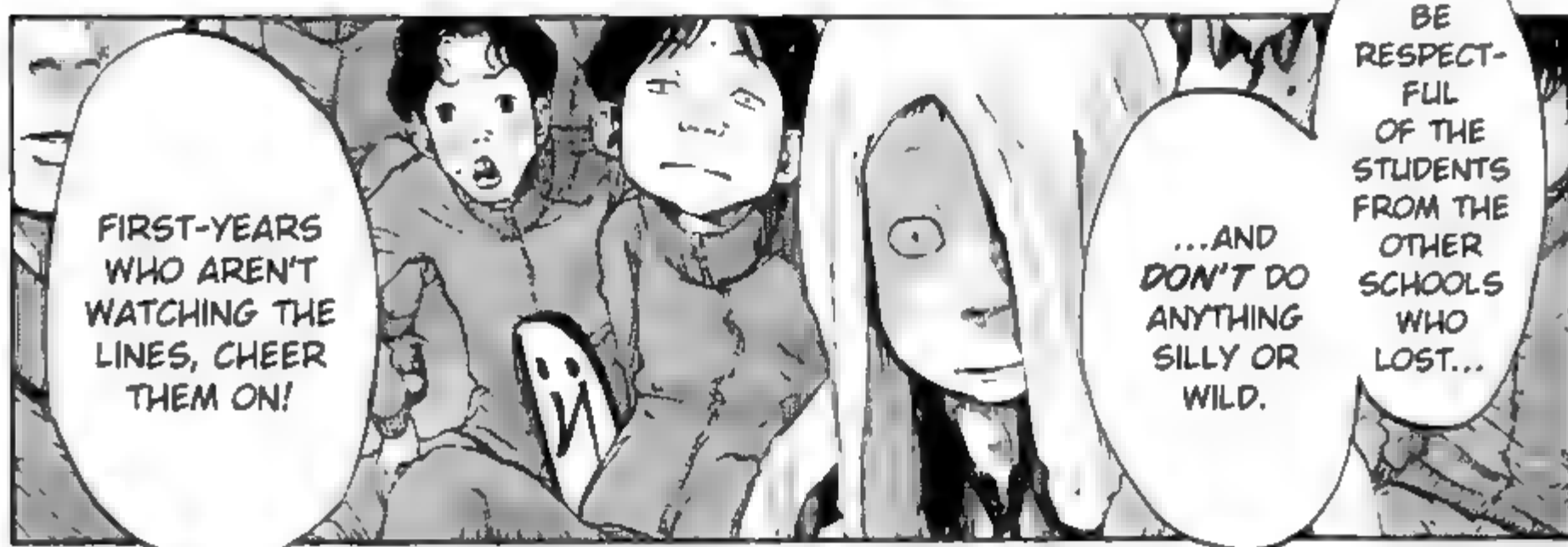




...IT TURNS
OUT THE
SINGLES FINAL
IS BETWEEN
YAGUCHI AND
KOMATSU, BOTH
STUDENTS
FROM OUR
SCHOOL.

UMM...

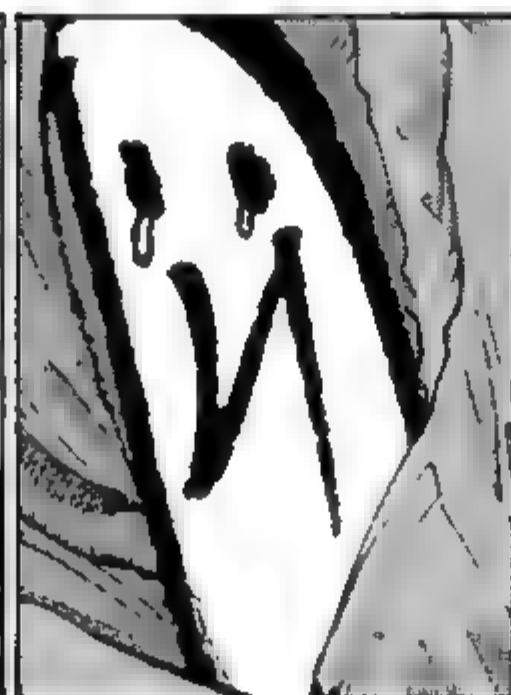
...
SO
...



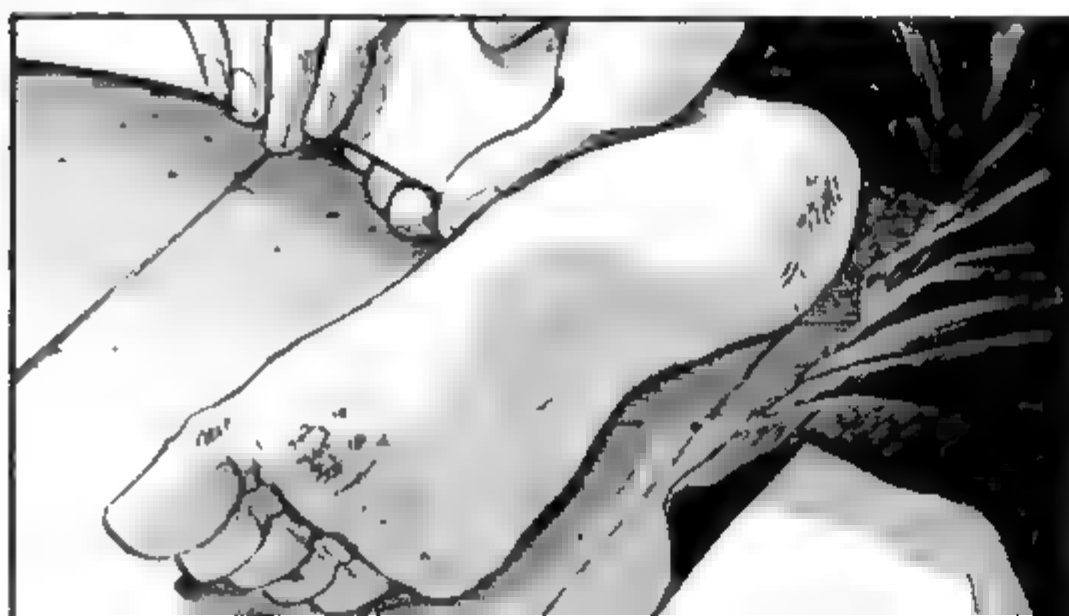
FIRST-YEARS
WHO AREN'T
WATCHING THE
LINES, CHEER
THEM ON!

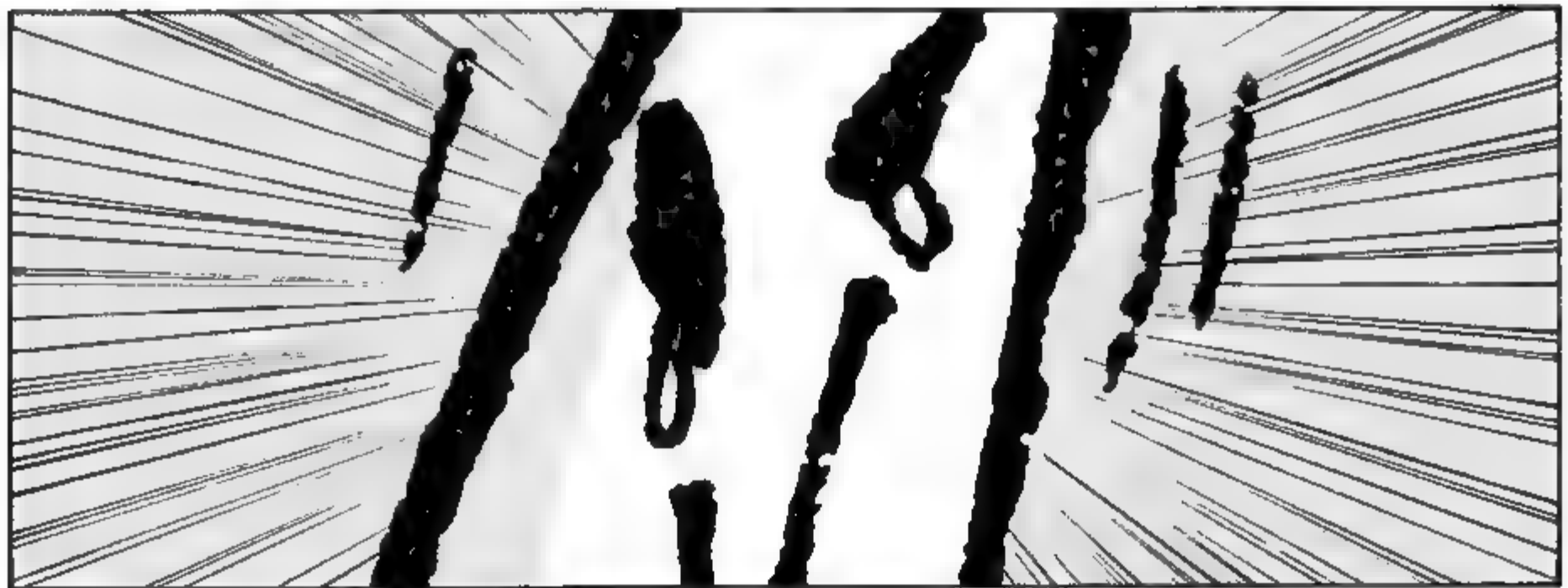
...AND
DON'T DO
ANYTHING
SILLY OR
WILD.

BE
RESPECT-
FUL
OF THE
STUDENTS
FROM THE
OTHER
SCHOOLS
WHO
LOST...



YOU'RE
DISMISSED.



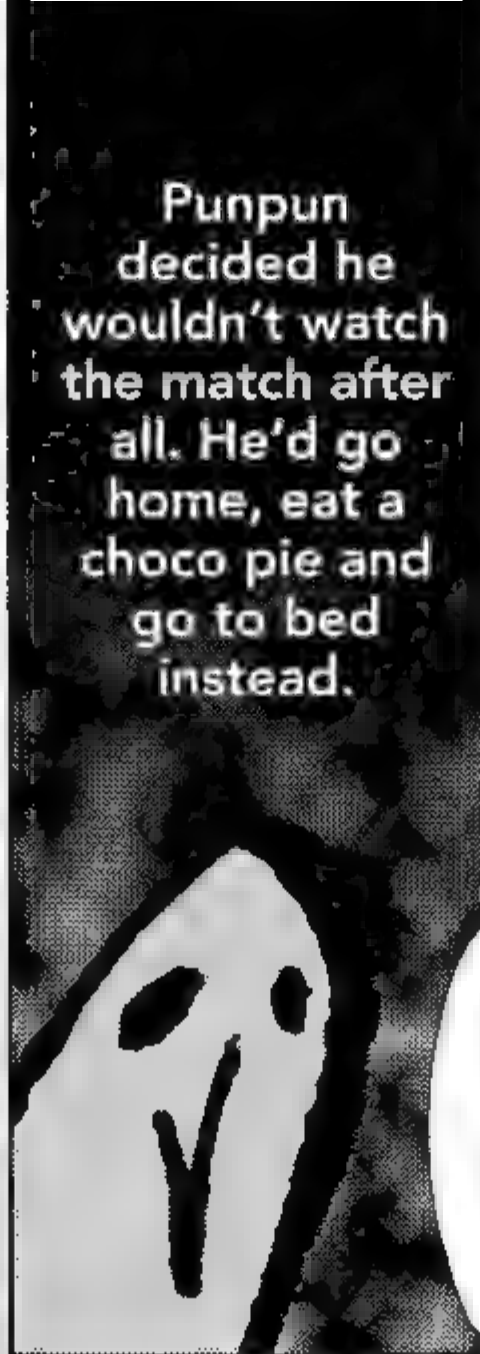




WHY ARE YOU BRINGING UP ALL THAT NEGATIVE STUFF RIGHT BEFORE MY MATCH?

SHUT UP...

I WANT A NOBLE WIN, DEVOID OF USELESS EMOTION.



Punpun decided he wouldn't watch the match after all. He'd go home, eat a choco pie and go to bed instead.



KOMATSU, GO FOR IT!

I DON'T LIKE YAGUCHI— HE'S TOO COCKY.

SWAT HIM LIKE A FLY!



WHAT-EVER.

HUH? WHAT THE HELL WAS THAT ...?

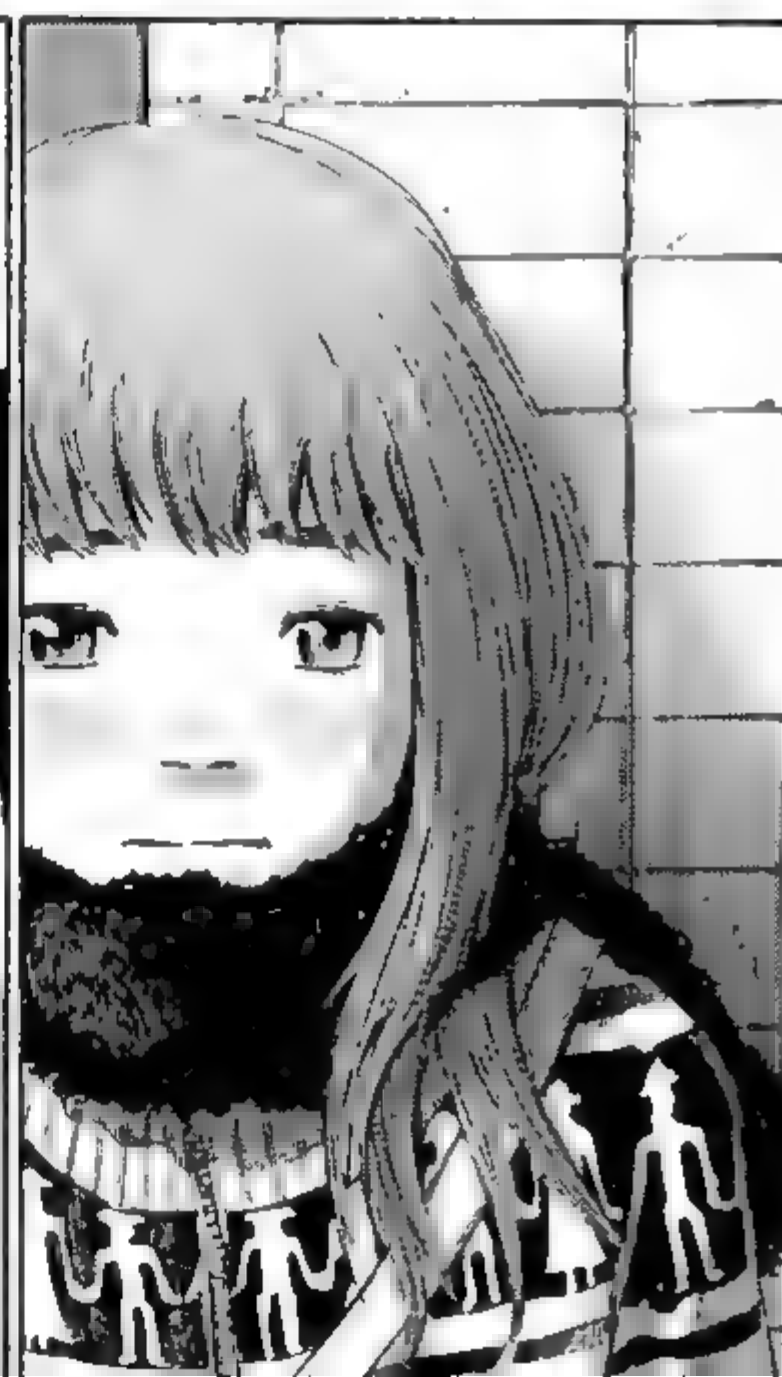
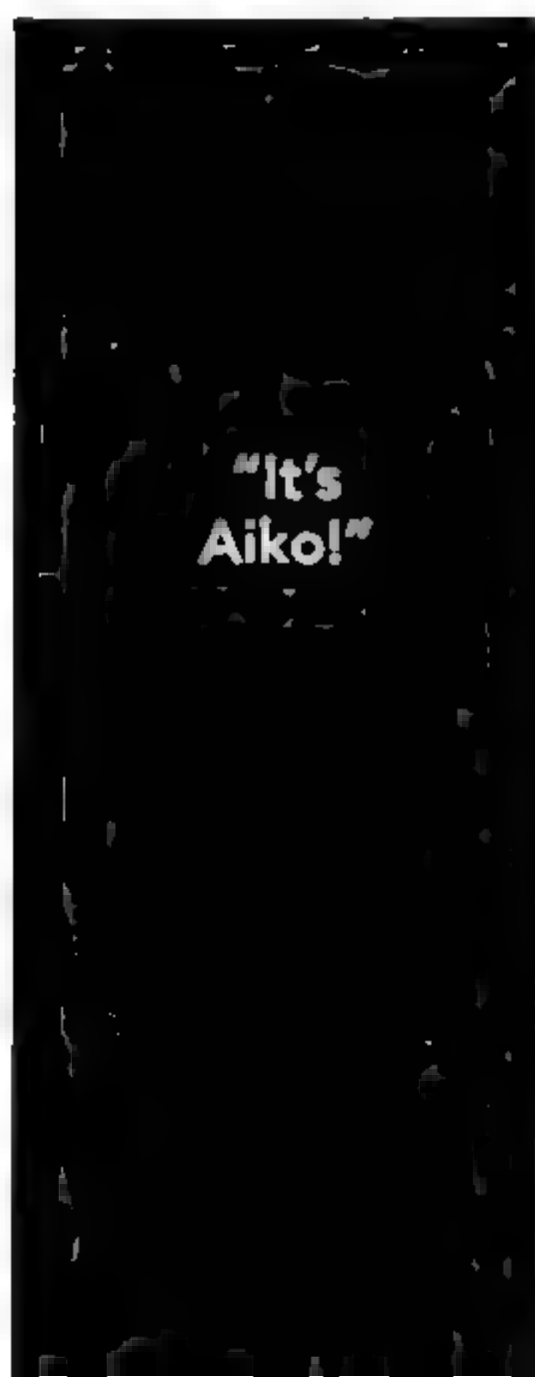


MAYBE I'LL JUST GO HOME...

PUSSY, PUSSY.

EHH...

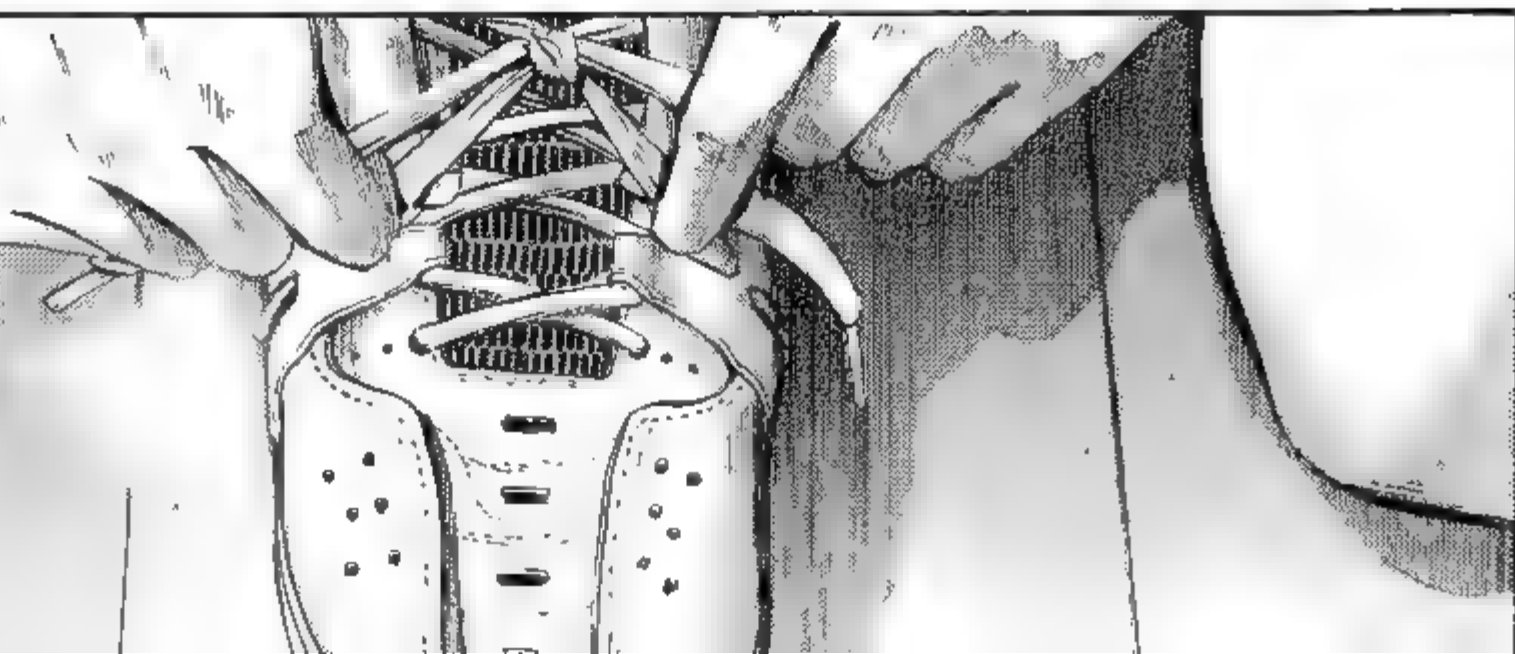
I REALLY DON'T CARE WHO WINS.





She's
looking
at me!

THE
FINAL MATCH
FOR BOYS'
SINGLES IS
STARTING.



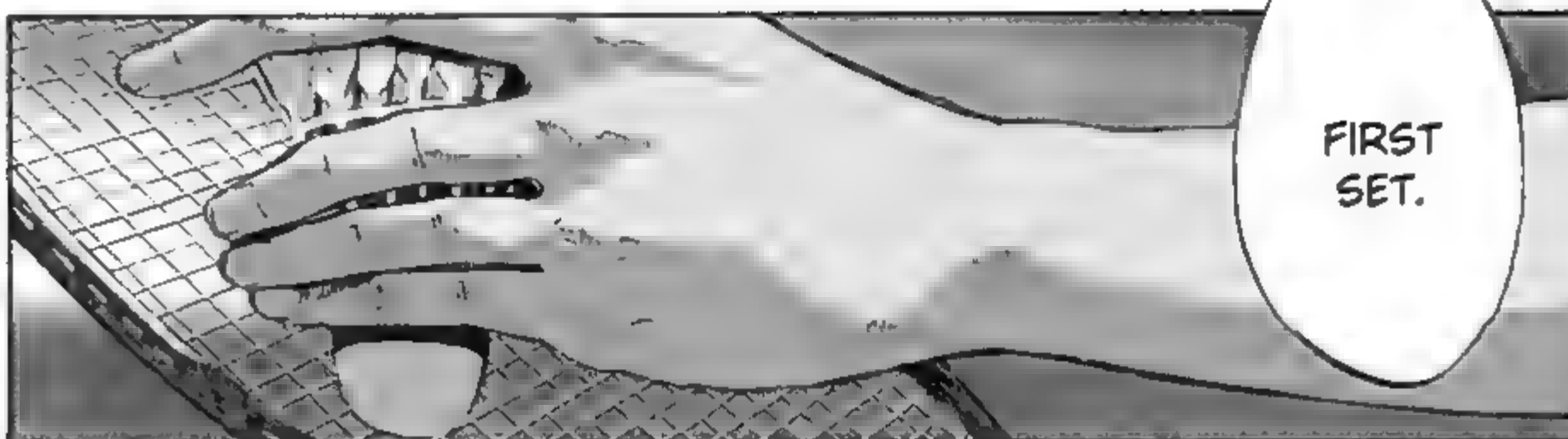
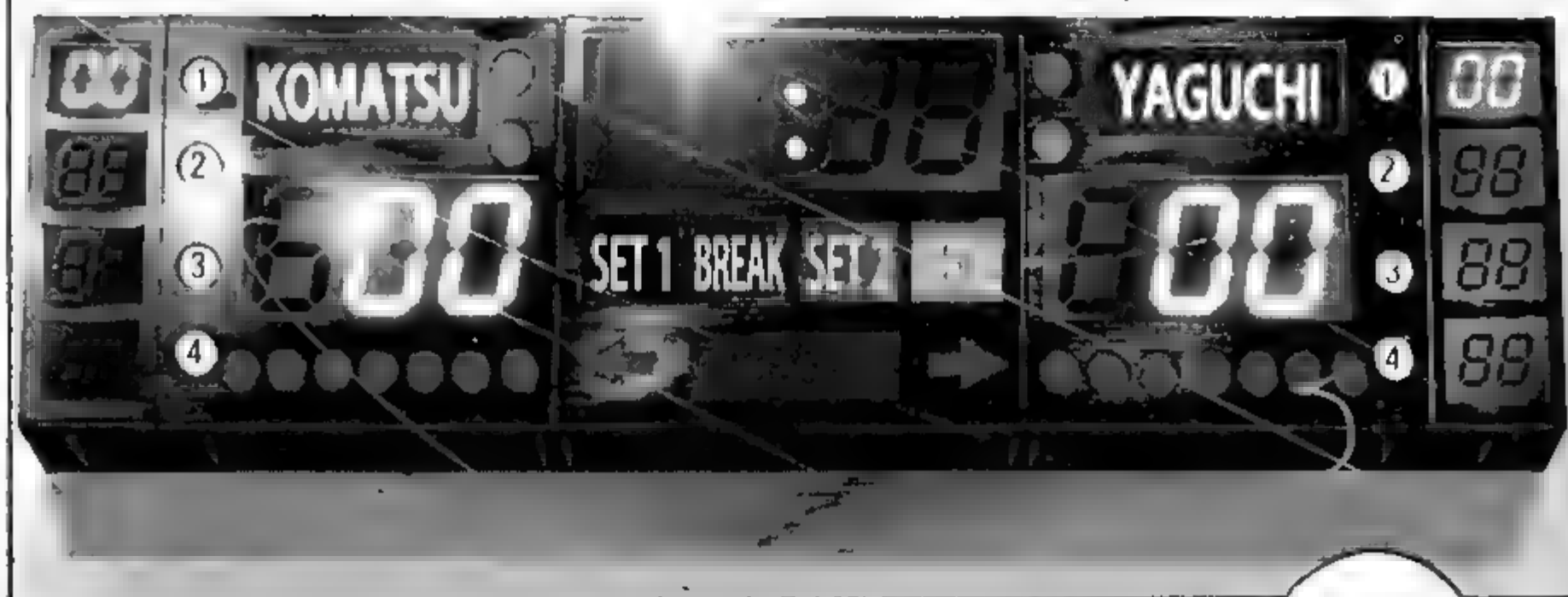


ATHLETES!

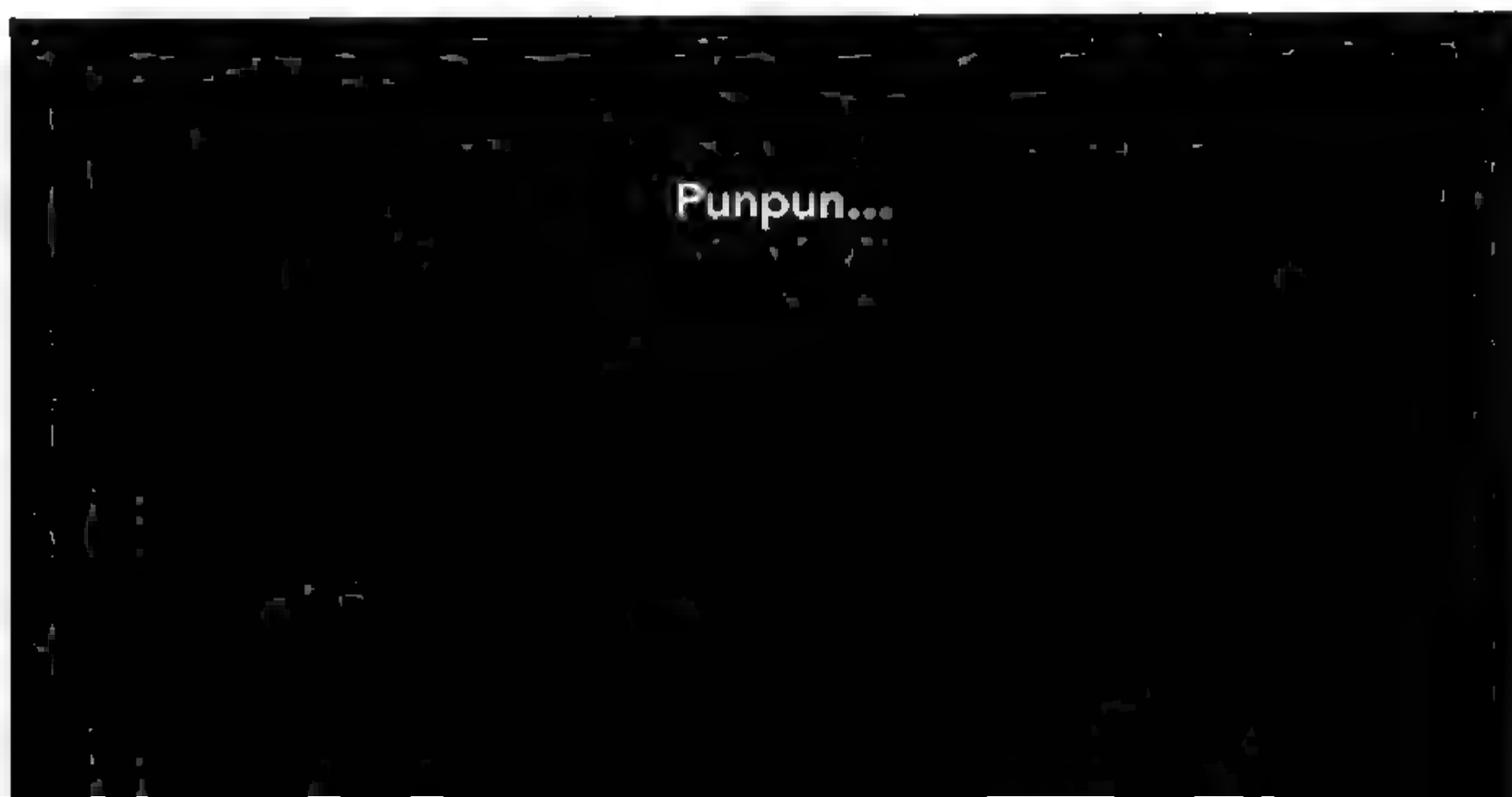
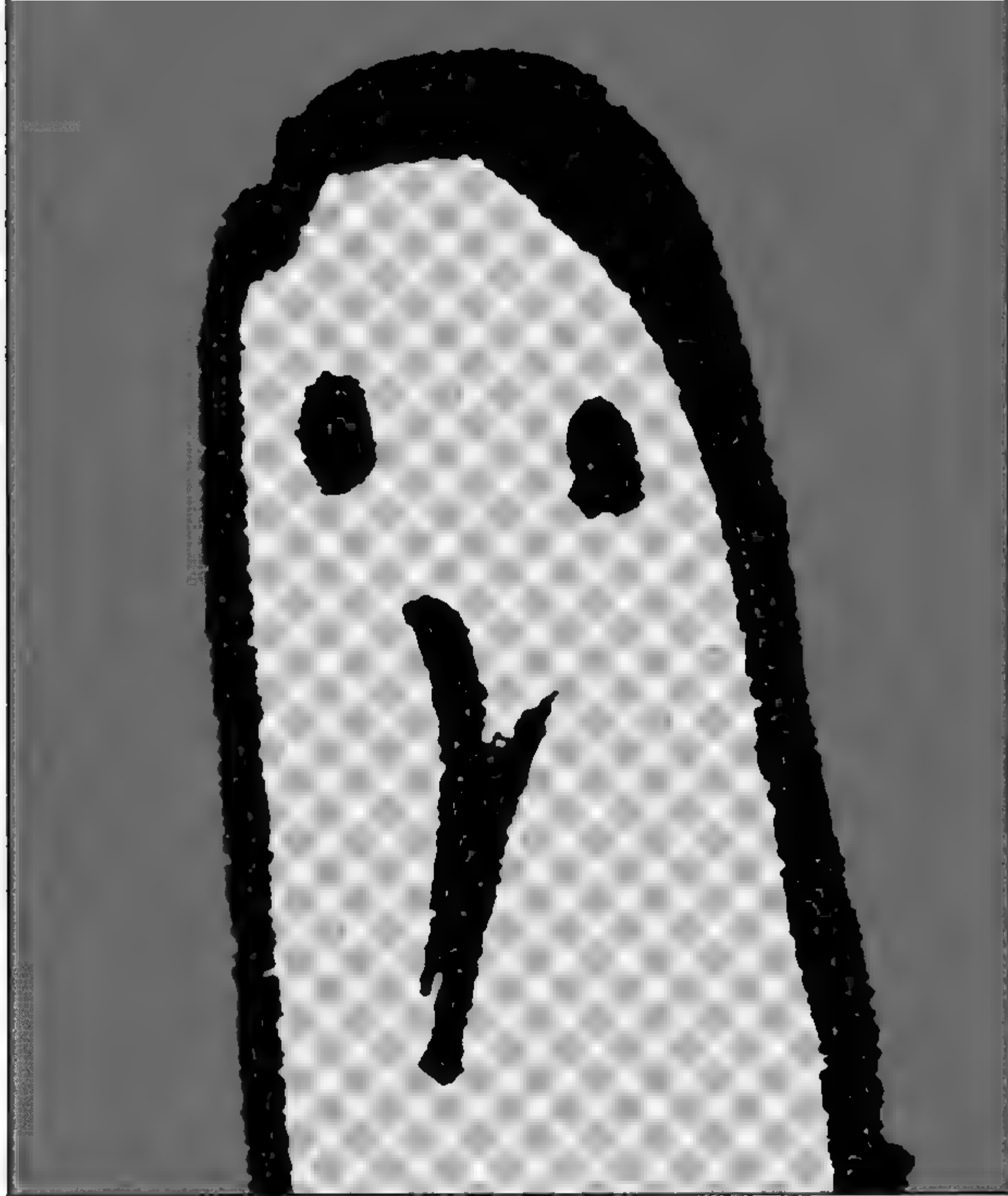


TO THE
CENTER
OF THE
COURT!











...couldn't
move a
muscle
for some
reason.

...for
so long
before.

He had
never
stared
into Aiko's
eyes...

...in
her
wide,
gorgeous
eyes.

He
wondered
how he was
reflected...





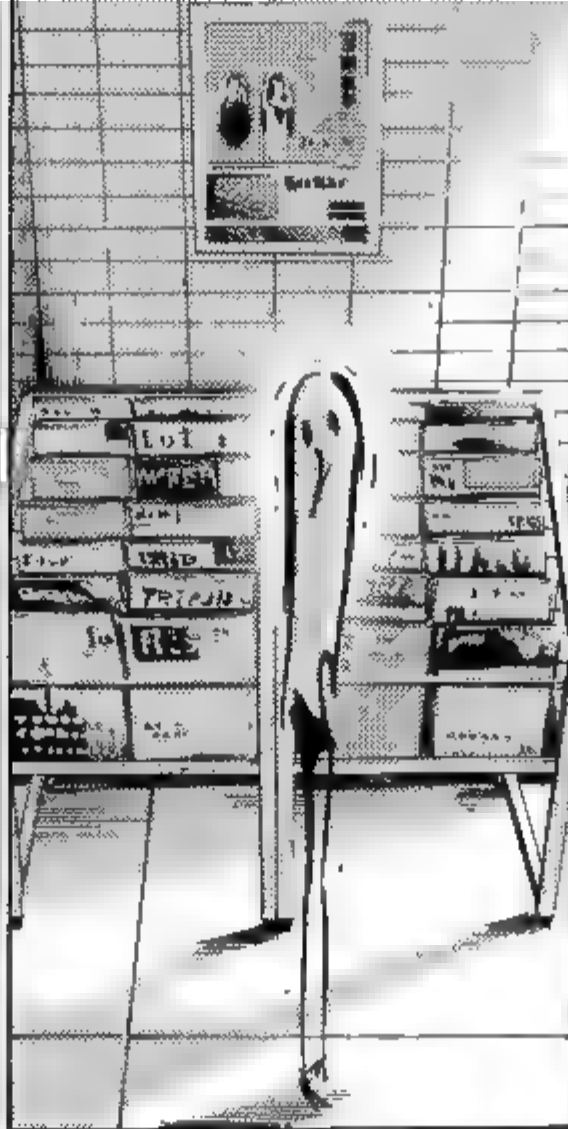
She's still
looking this
way!

She's definitely
looking!
She's totally
looking!

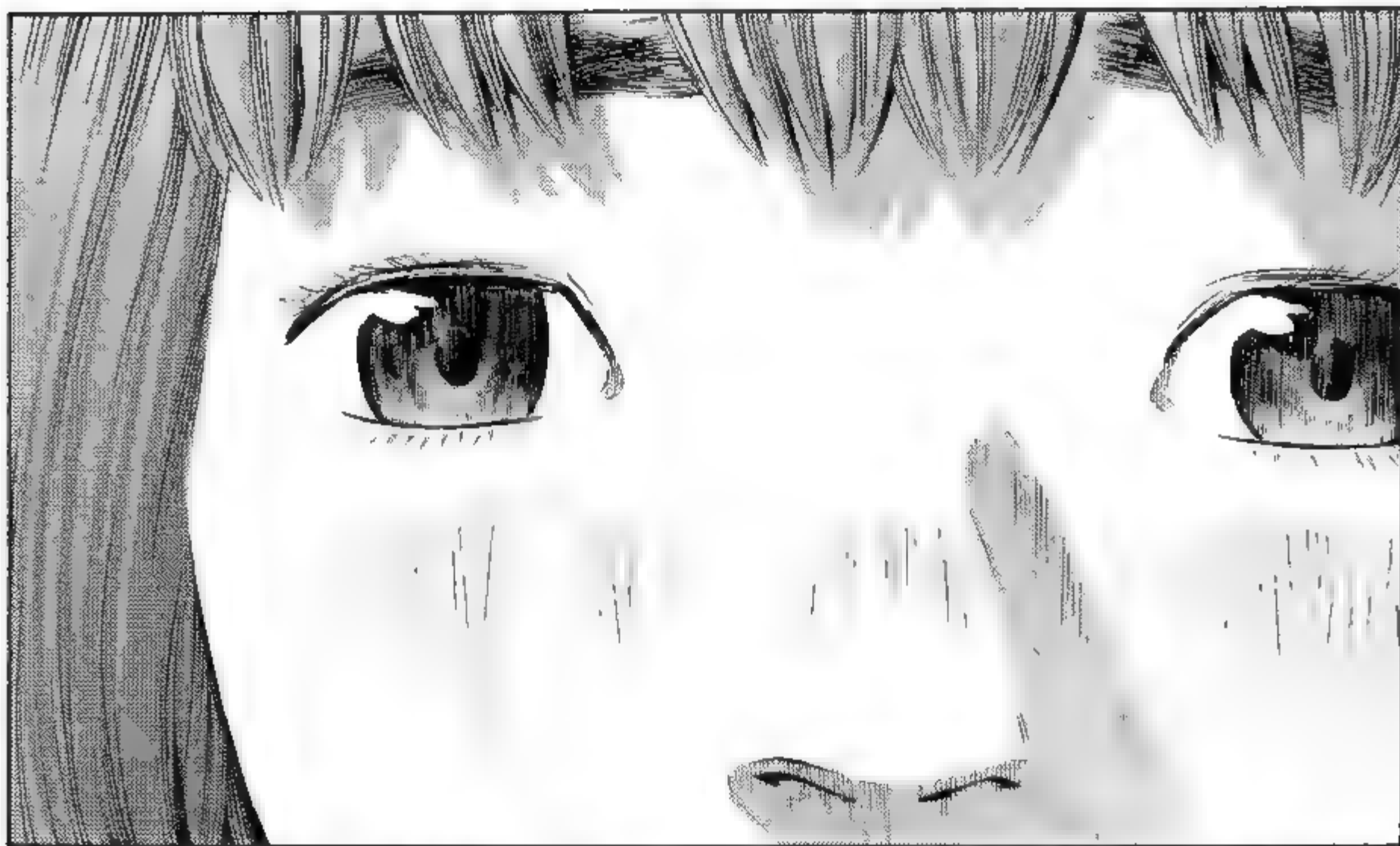


...who
seemed
to have
something
she wanted
to tell him.
Punpun was
powerless.

But it
was all he
could do
to keep his
knees from
shaking
in front of
Aiko...



Punpun
wanted to
run away.



Whoa, if you
keep looking
at me like that...



...MAYBE
I'LL CLAW
OUT YOUR
WIDE,
GORGEOUS
EYES!



And
drop a
gentle
smooch
on
your
lips...?



...was
ready to
explode!

With everything
that was careening
through his mind,
Punpun...

POW!



IT'S
TANAKA
AND
NUMATA.

WHAT
ARE YOU
TWO DOING
HERE?



HEY.



Just in
the nick
of time.



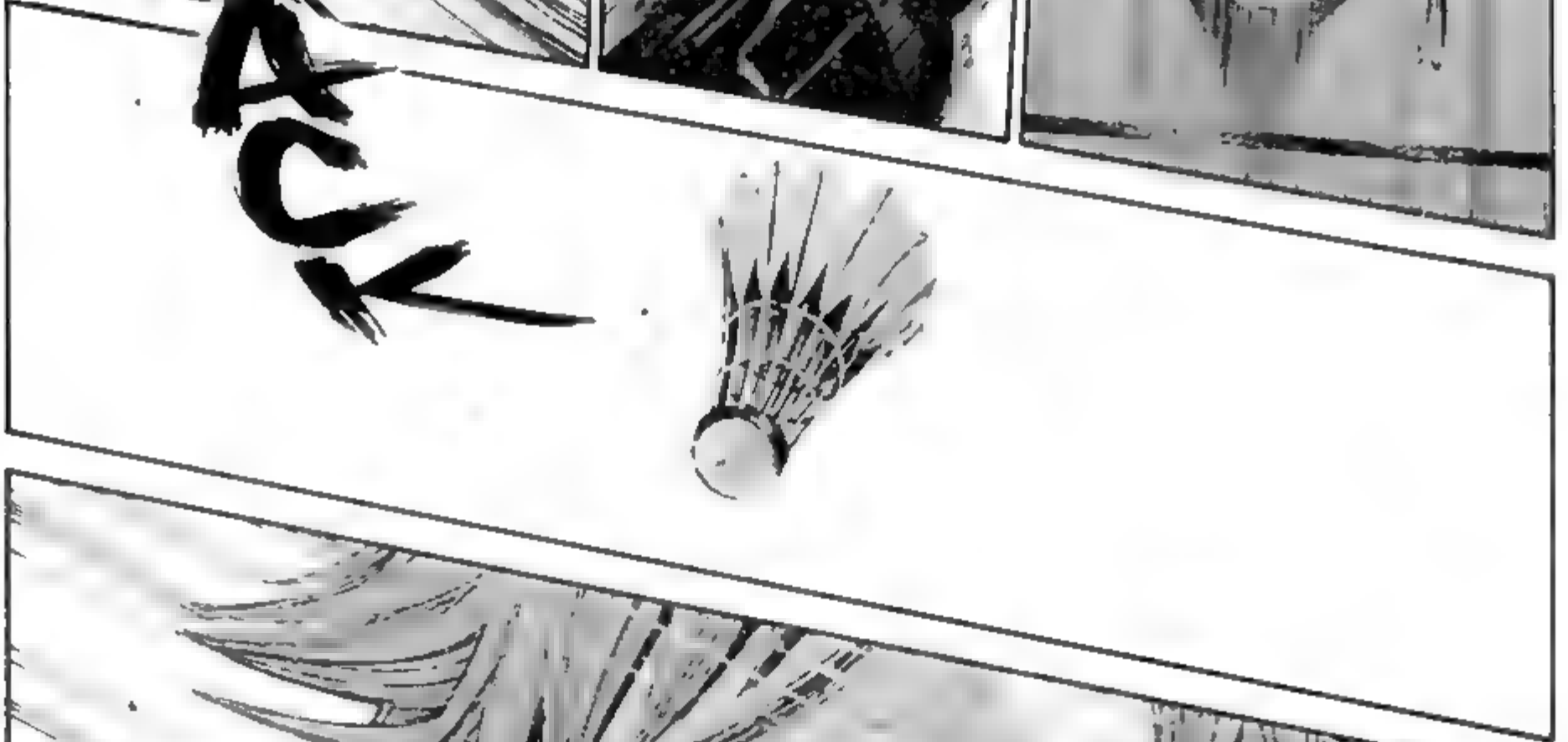
Way
to go,
Punpun!

Actually,
Punpun
was
showing
off how
in control
he was.











NO
WAY.

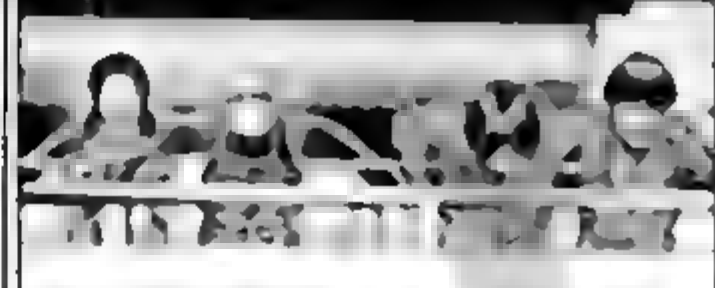


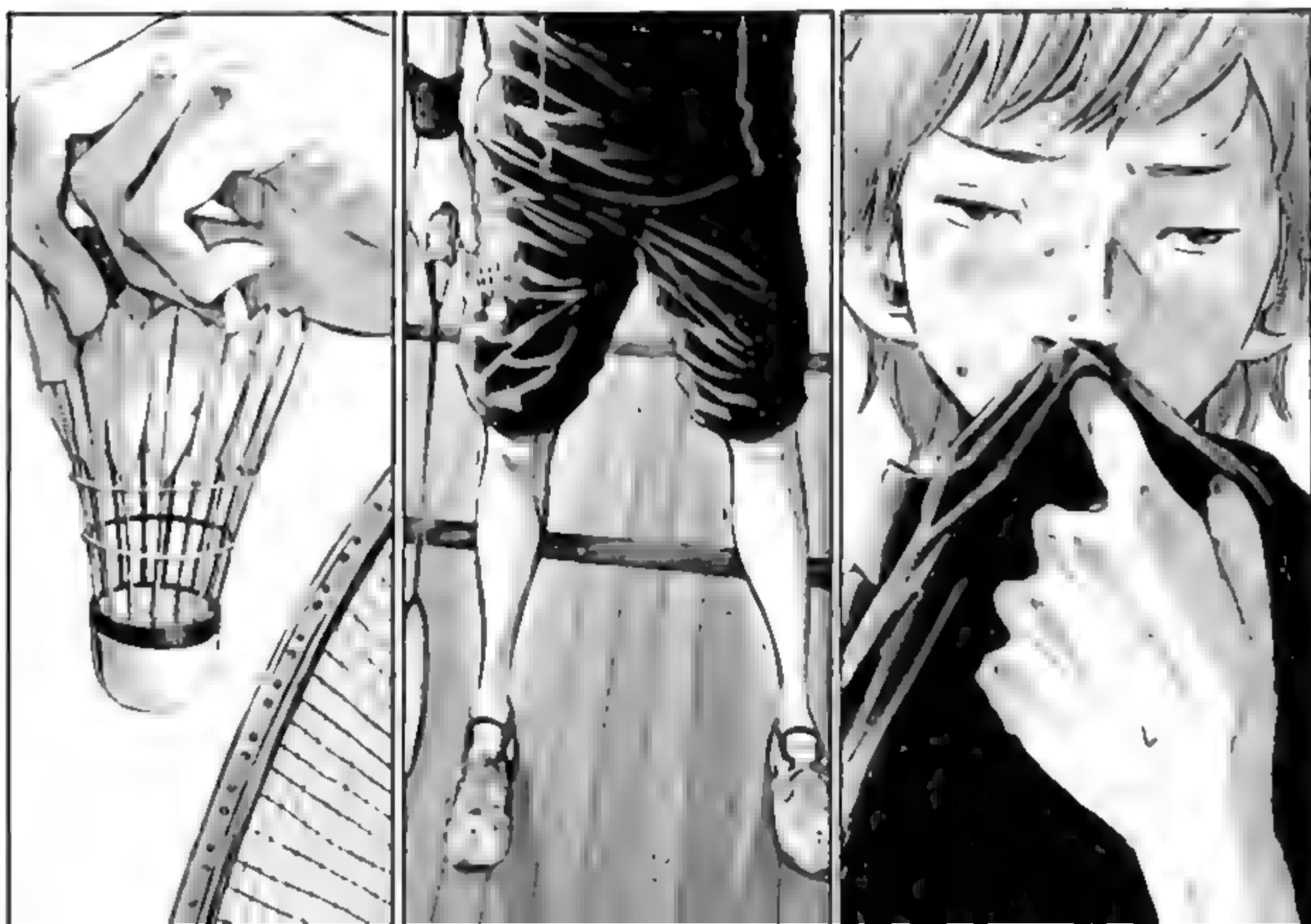
To

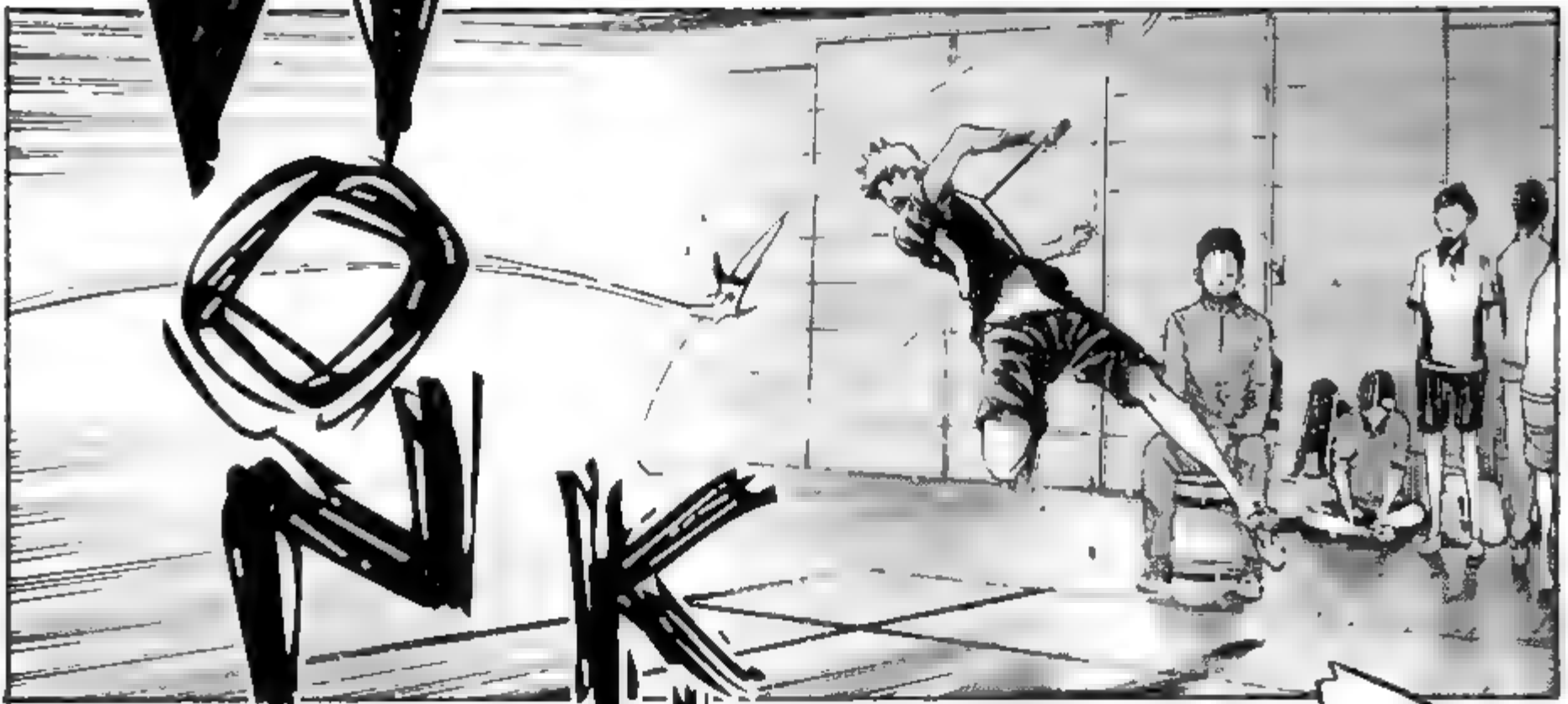
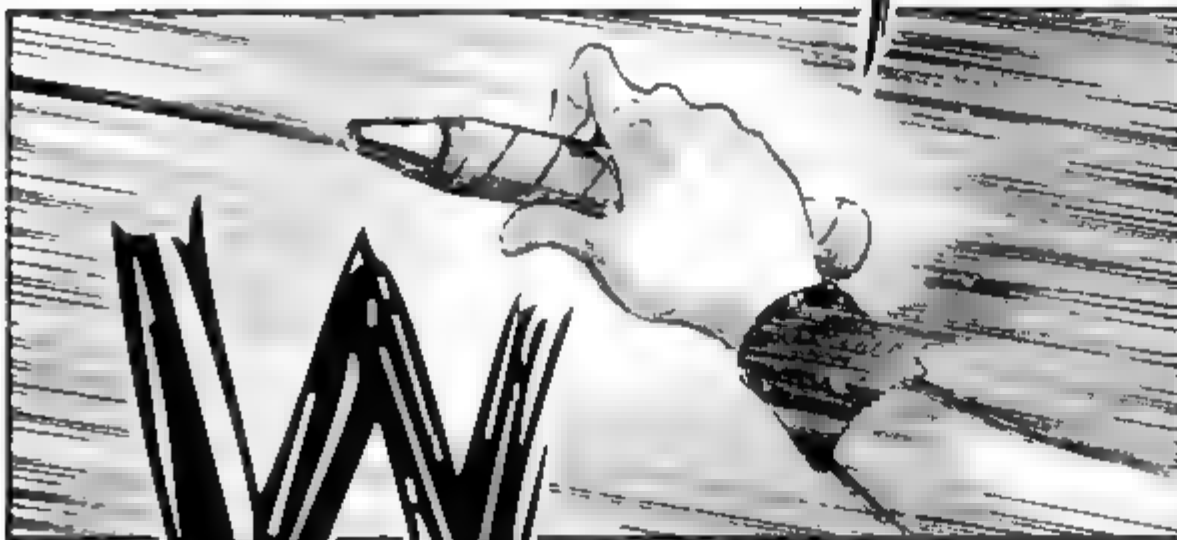
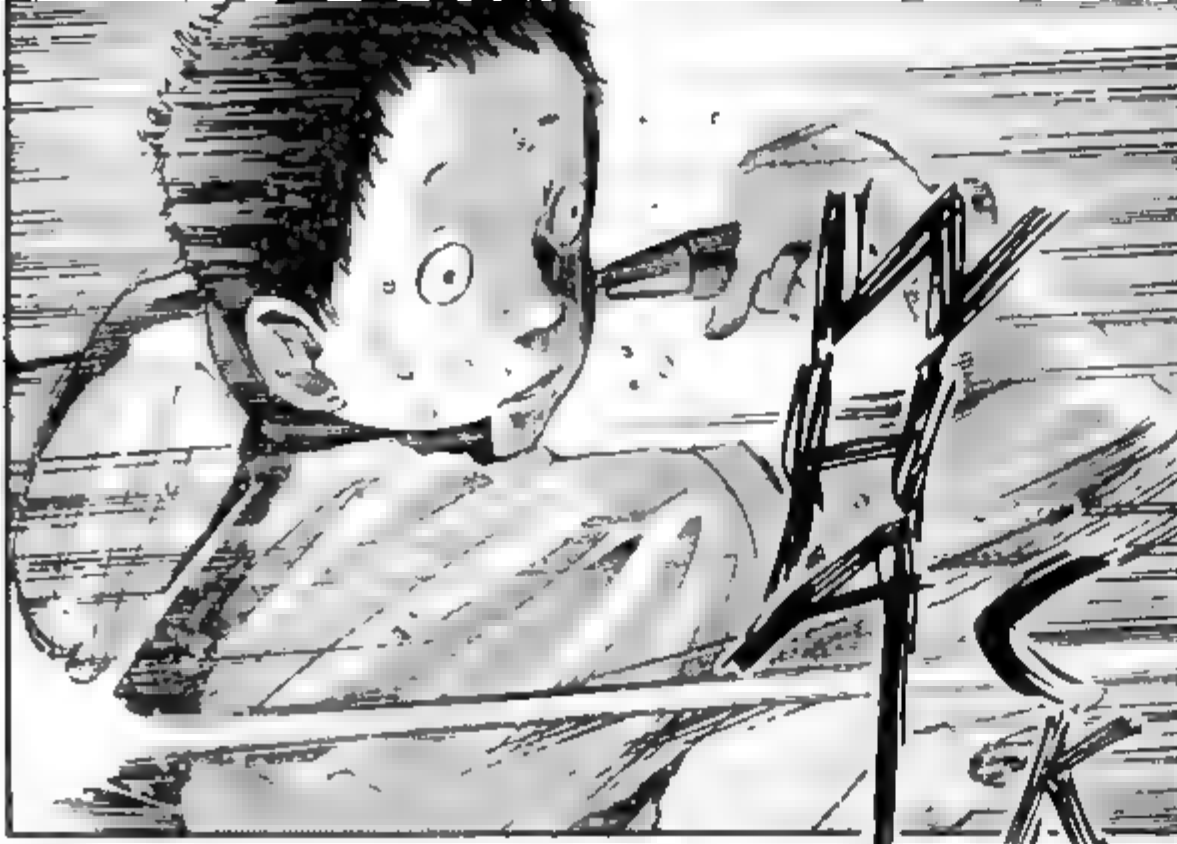
NK



OH,
SORRY

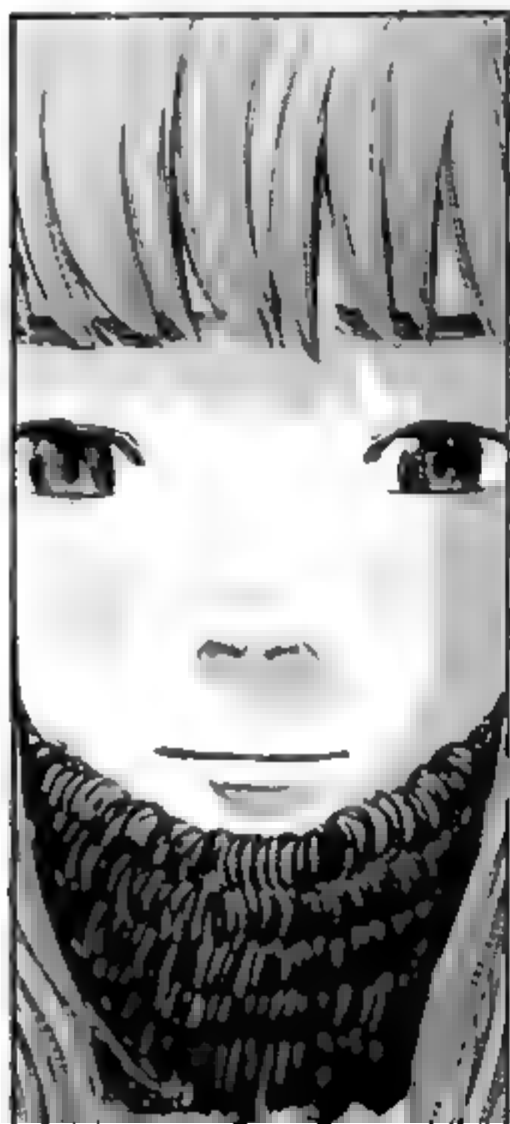








IS THAT
YAGUCHI'S
MOM?

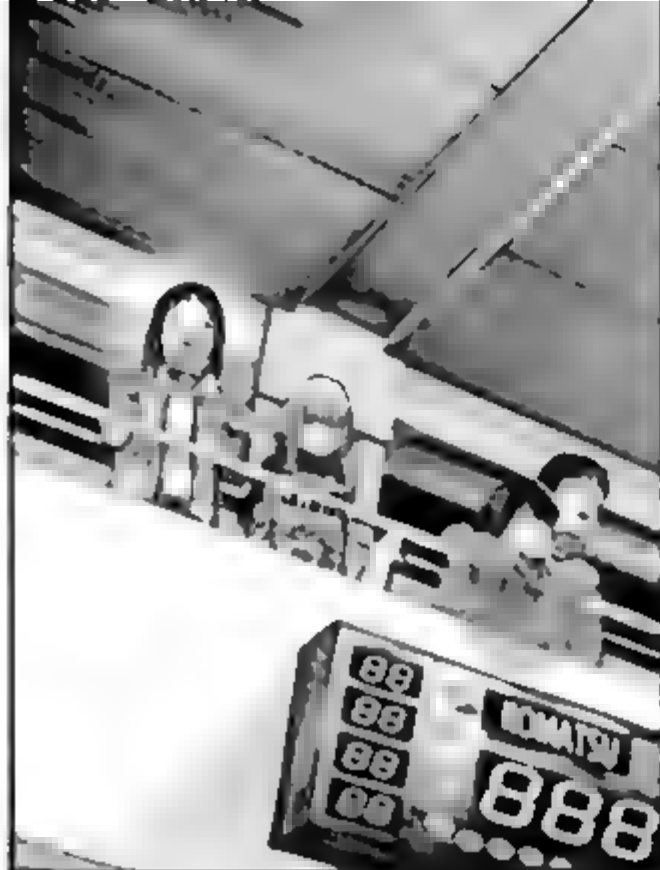


Punpun
suddenly
had a
really bad
feeling.



SECOND-
YEAR
GETTING
LAID LEFT
AND RIGHT
HUNG LIKE
A MONSTER
MUSHROOM
MAMA'S
BOY.

WELL,
WHATEVER.
PUSSY,
PUSSY.



...now and
forever,
would
never turn
out the
way he
wanted.

Maybe
his
life...





...and then, depending on how things went, they'd head to his room and have sex and all that.

He'd smooch with Aiko on the bus home...

Yaguchi was going to win, one way or another.





KOMATSU

...

...IT'S PATHETIC TO BE THAT OBSESSED WITH WINNING.

WHAT?!
IN?!

...Punpun should never have agreed to the wager.

If he was going to be this pathetic about it...

That's right.

WERE YOU EVEN PAYING ATTENTION?



...IS INFLUENCING THE OUTCOME OF MY BEAUTIFUL WIN!

IT'S ABSURD THAT A LUDICROUS MISTAKE BY AN EMPTY-HEADED IDIOT LIKE YOU...



IT WAS OUT.



I'm just a garnish for your lives!

I don't care if you forget me!

"I wonder what would have happened if I'd lost that day? Ha ha ha. Do you remember the guy? His name was Onodera."

"When we were in middle school, I made a bet on a match with you as the prize.

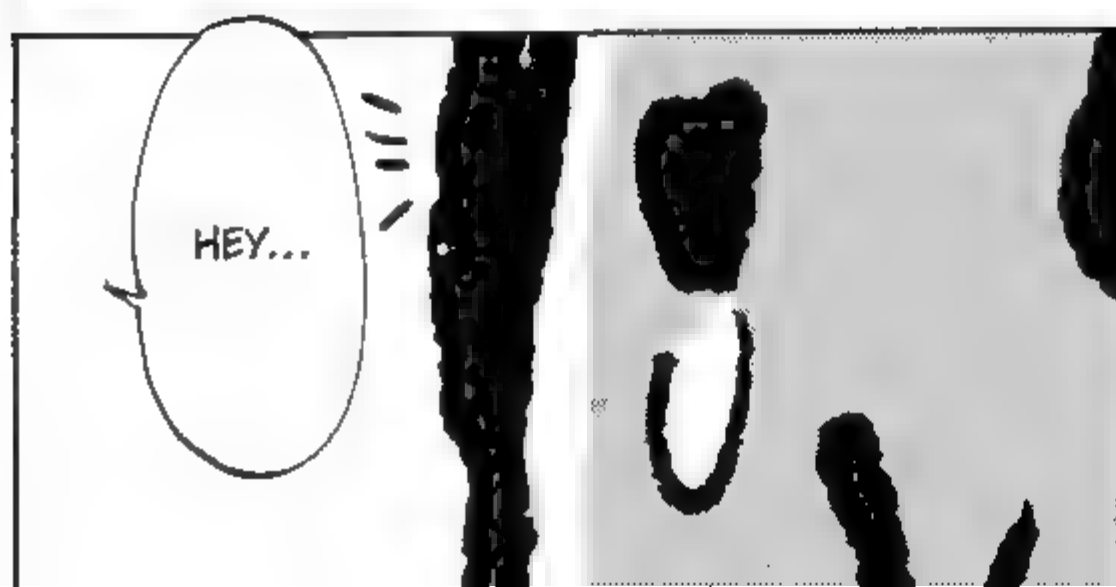
Years from now, the always cool and correct Yaguchi will turn to Aiko on the eve of their wedding and say...

Yeah.

...Pupun thought.

"When I get home, I'm going to cry a lot..."

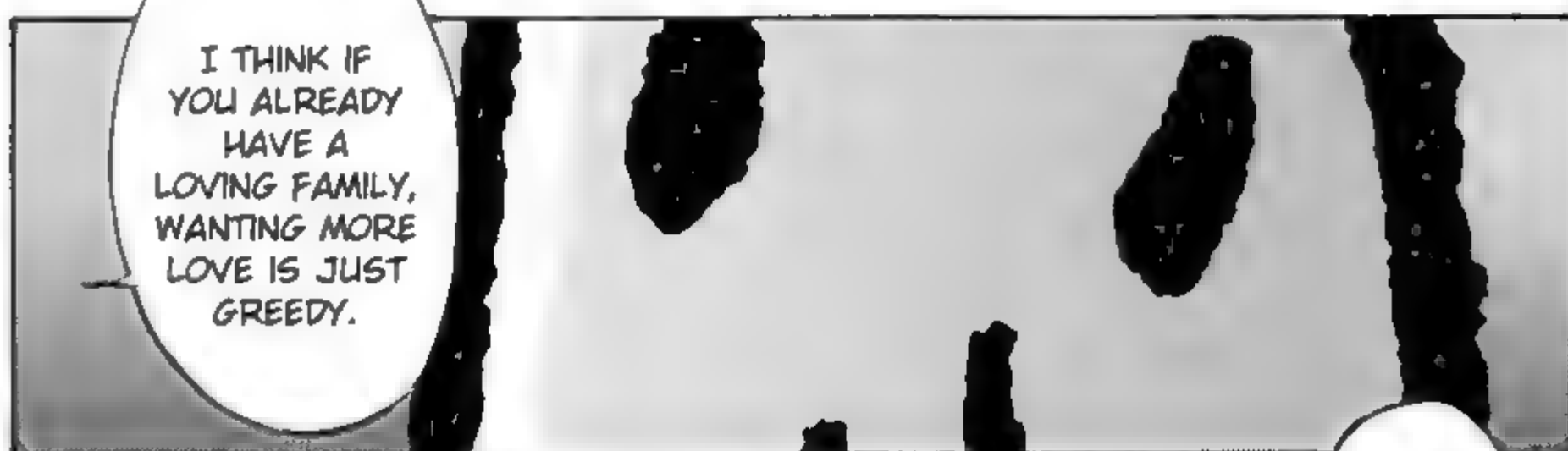
Sadness filled him.





WHAT DO
YOU THINK
ABOUT
PEOPLE
FALLING IN
LOVE...

...AND
DATING?



I THINK IF
YOU ALREADY
HAVE A
LOVING FAMILY,
WANTING MORE
LOVE IS JUST
GREEDY.

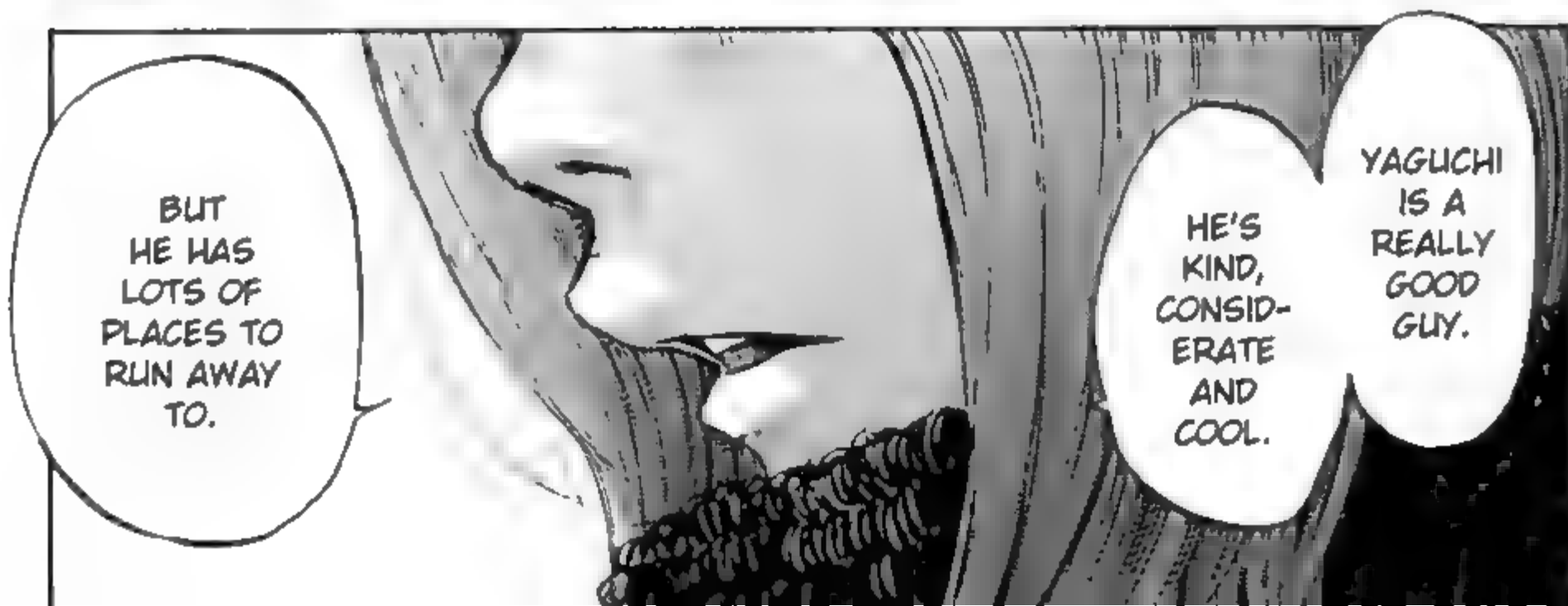


I WANT
SOMEONE
TO GIVE UP
EVERYTHING
AND JUST
SEE ME.

I
DON'T
WANT
THAT.

...YOU'LL
NEVER BE
ANYTHING
MORE THAN
OUTSIDERS
TO EACH
OTHER.

EVEN IF
YOU BECOME
BOYFRIEND
AND GIRL-
FRIEND, NO
MATTER HOW
MUCH YOU
LOVE EACH
OTHER...

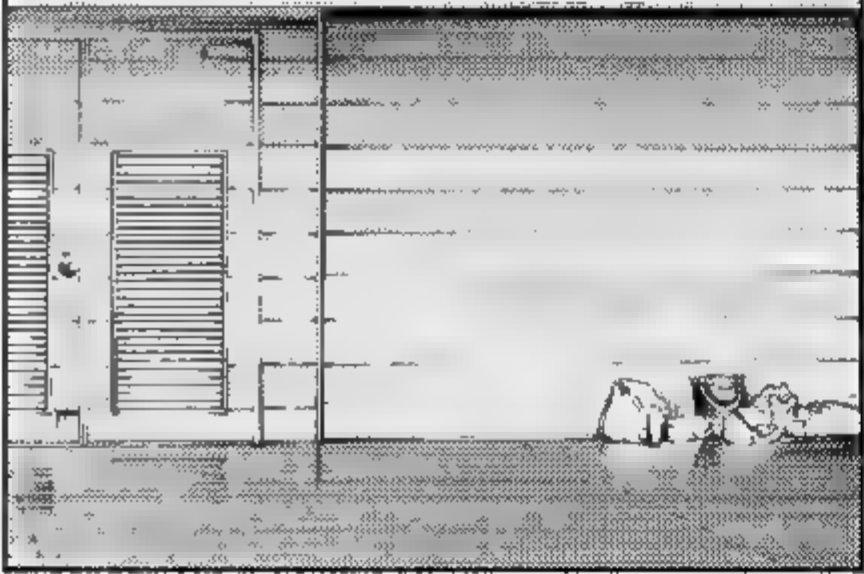
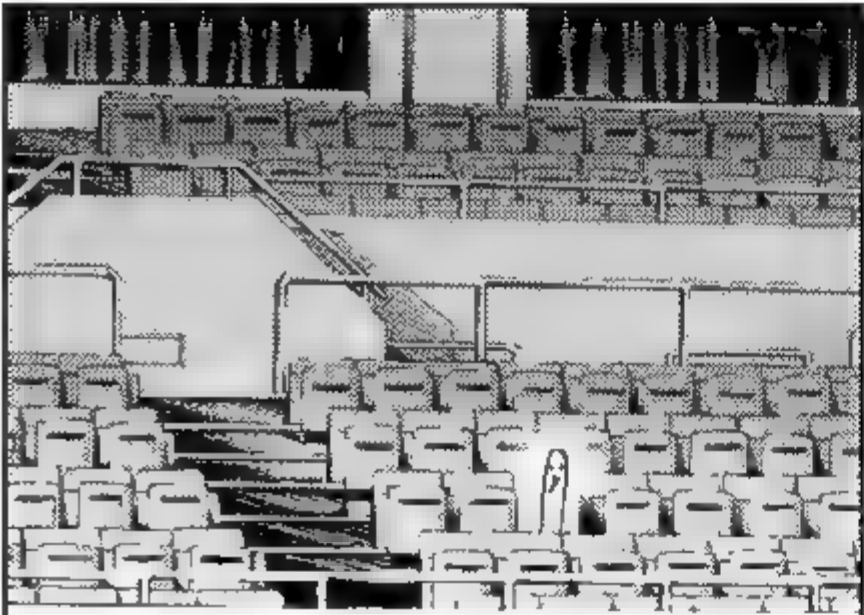


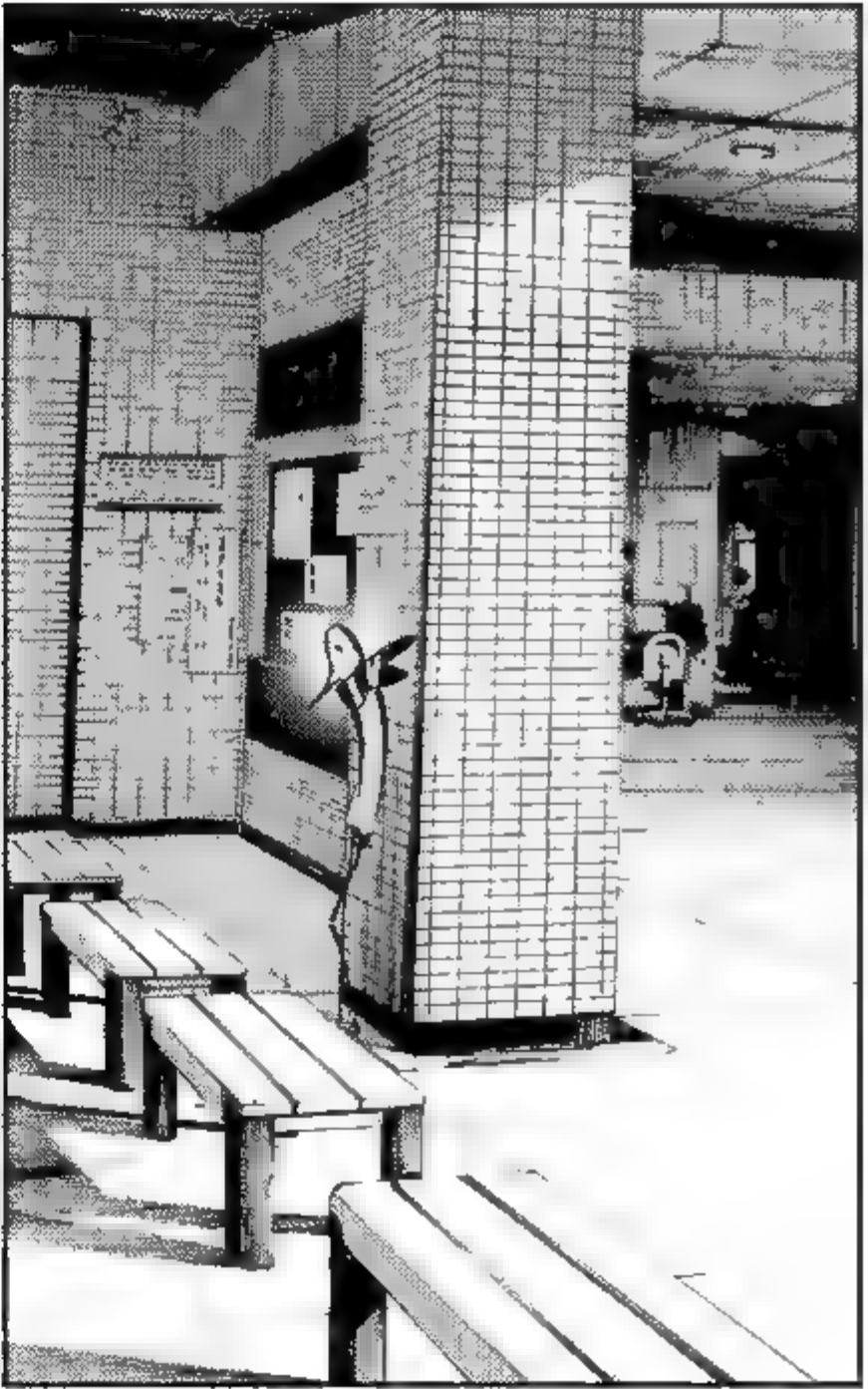
BUT
HE HAS
LOTS OF
PLACES TO
RUN AWAY
TO.

HE'S
KIND,
CONSID-
ERATE
AND
COOL.

YAGUCHI
IS A
REALLY
GOOD
GUY.

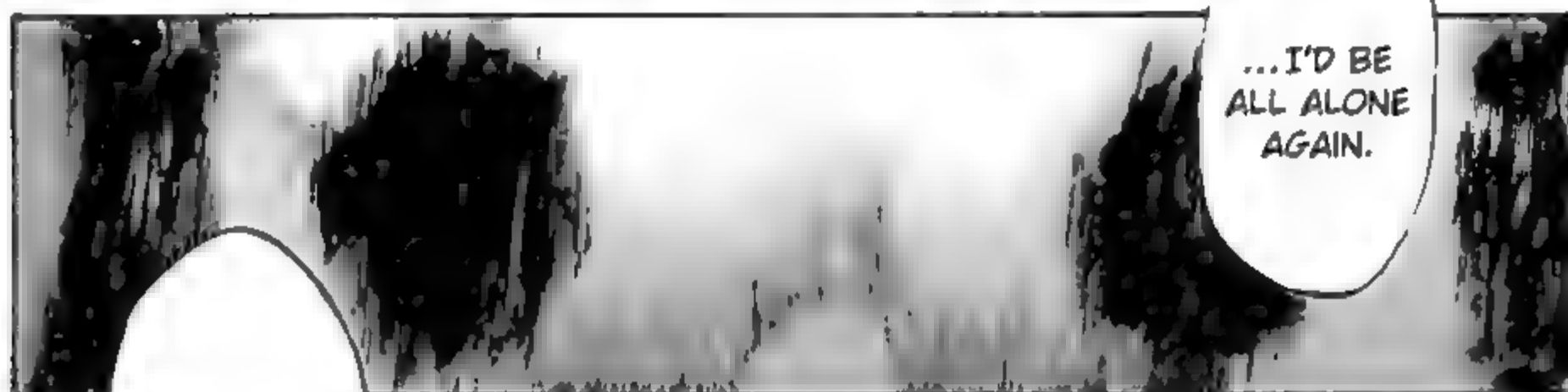








EVENTUALLY...



...I'D BE ALL ALONE AGAIN.



DO YOU UNDERSTAND ...

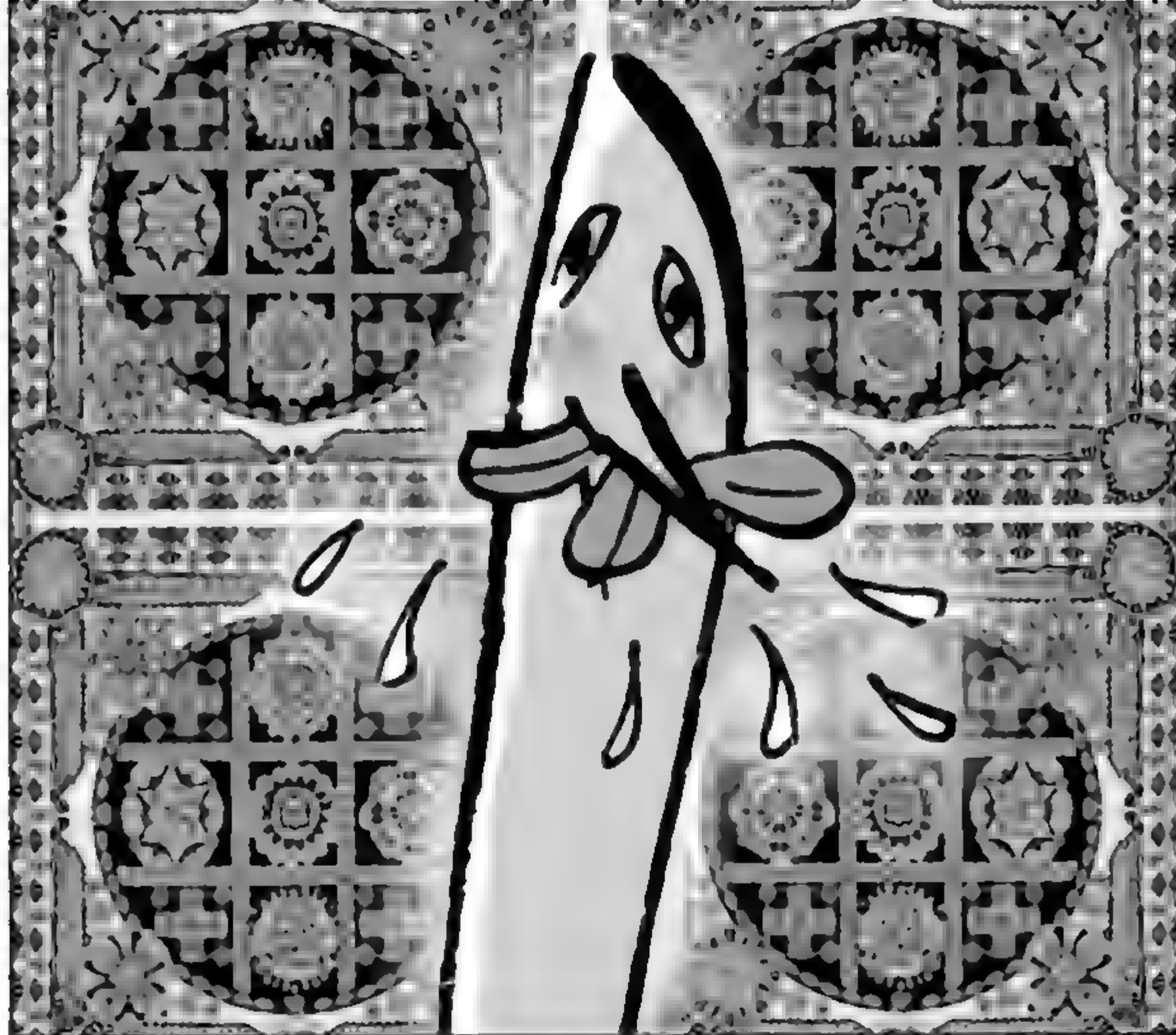


...HOW I FEEL, PUNPUN?

...had inadvertently caused Punpun to become...

The warmth of Aiko's hand...

Understand ...?!





I KNOW
YOU CAN'T,
PUNPUN.
YOU'RE A
COWARD.

JUST
KIDDING
...

PUNPUN
...
...DO
YOU
THINK...

...YOU
COULD GIVE
UP YOUR
FAMILY, YOUR
DREAMS AND
EVERYTHING
YOU OWN
FOR THE
PERSON YOU
LOVE?



...I KNOW I
COULD DO IT.
FOR SOMEONE
I REALLY LOVE,
I COULD DO
ANYTHING.

BUT...



I DREAM
THAT I'M
WAITING FOR
SOMEONE
FOR A LONG
TIME.

I HAVE
THE SAME
DREAM
OVER AND
OVER.

YOU
KNOW
...



IT'S A MIDDLE-AGED WOMAN I'VE NEVER SEEN BEFORE, BUT I'M SO HAPPY TO SEE HER THAT I PULL MY FEET OUT OF THE SAND AND RUN OVER TO HER.

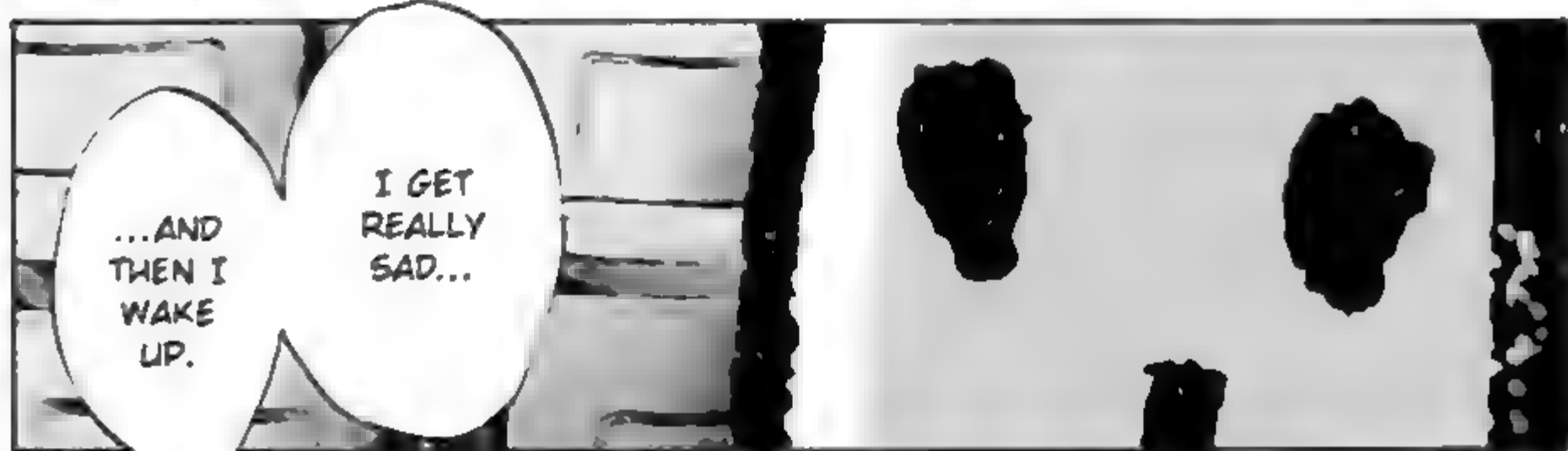
BUT THEN, AT SOME POINT, I NOTICE THAT SOMEONE IS STARING AT ME.

IN THE DARK, ON A BEACH, I'M WAITING FOR SOMEONE...

...FOR YEARS AND DECADES.



BUT WHEN I GET THERE, IT'S JUST MY OWN REFLECTION IN THE WATER.



...AND THEN I WAKE UP.

I GET REALLY SAD...



...I FEEL VERY DARK.

WHEN I THINK ABOUT HOW WE'RE ALONE LIKE THAT WHEN WE DIE...



I THINK I
WANTED
LOTS OF
PEOPLE TO
KNOW WHO
I WAS.

I
WROTE
THAT I
WANTED
TO BE AN
ACTRESS,
A SINGER
OR A MODEL
WHEN I
GREW
UP.

...THE
ESSAYS WE
WROTE IN
ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL?

DO YOU
REMEM-
BER...



NOW
I JUST
WANT
ONE.

BUT
THAT'S
NOT TRUE
ANYMORE.



I WANT
THAT
PERFECT
COMPRE-
HENSION.

...WHO
KNOWS ME
FROM THE TOP
OF MY HEAD
TO THE TIPS
OF MY TOES,
WITHOUT A
MILLIMETER
OF MISUNDER-
STANDING.

I
WANT
ONE
PERSON
...



...IF I CAN
JUST BE
WITH THAT
ONE PERSON.

I DON'T
WANT
ANYTHING
ELSE...





EVEN IF YOU LOSE THIS MATCH, YOU'RE GUARANTEED A SLOT IN THE PREFECTURE TOURNAMENT. BUT IF YOU GET HURT, IT'LL ALL BE FOR NOTHING.



YAGUCHI, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?



WHOA, YAGUCHI IS LOSING HIS LEAD.

YOU'RE FAVORING YOUR RIGHT LEG. DON'T PUSH YOURSELF IF YOU'RE NOT 100 PERCENT.



...I'M FINE!

NO...



I WASN'T SURE WHAT WAS GOING ON, BUT I DIDN'T LIKE HOW HE WAS GETTING ALL WORKED UP.

HE SAID HE HAD SOMETHING IMPORTANT TO TELL ME AFTER THE MATCH, SO HE WANTED TO MAKE SURE I CAME.

HE CALLED ME YESTER-DAY.



"JUST RUN
AWAY WITH
ME"

"YOU
DON'T
NEED TO
GO TO THE
GAME..."

SO I
SAID TO
HIM...



HE
LAUGHED
AND SAID,
"WHAT ARE
YOU TALKING
ABOUT?"



PAY
ATTENTION—
THIS IS
A GREAT
MATCH!

AIKO,
WHAT
ARE YOU
MUTTERING
ABOUT
OVER
THERE...?



WE
LIVE...

THAT'S
WHEN I
FINALLY
KNEW...



"So
Aiko..."

IN
COMPLETELY
DIFFERENT
WORLDS.



"...waiting for someone to come get her?"

"Is she still..."

"...with her bag slung over her shoulder, full of things for Kagoshima..."

"That day in front of town hall..."



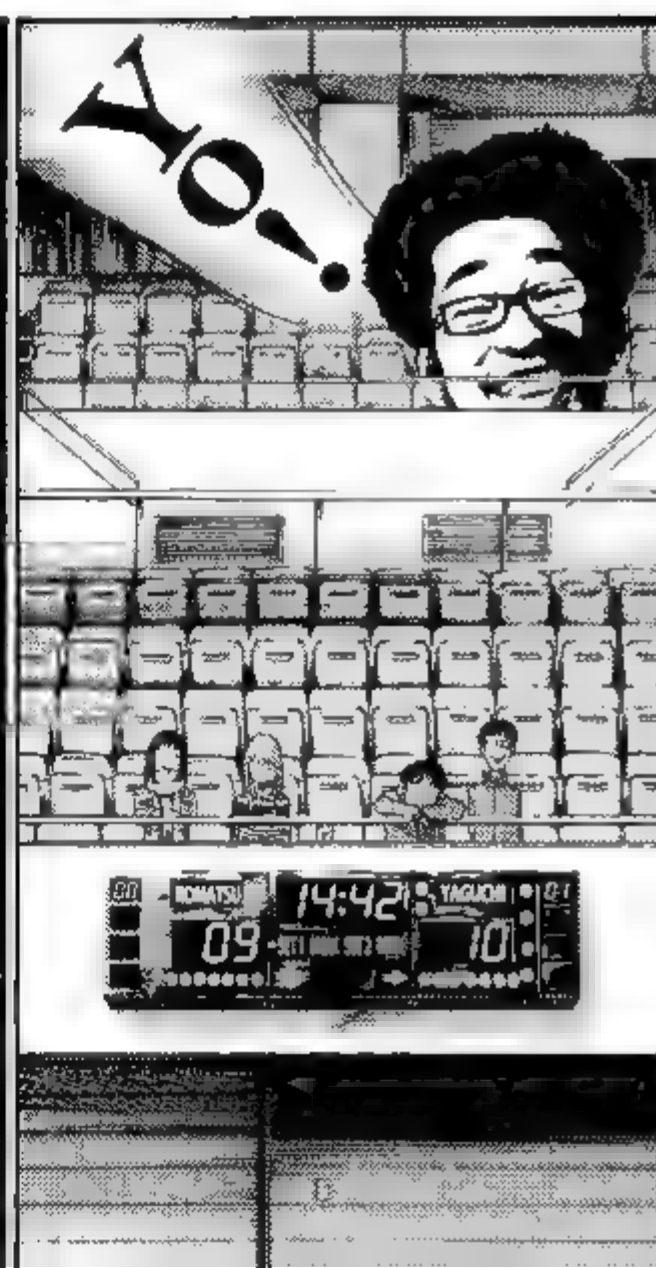
That's the
chant that
makes God
appear.

Dear God,
dear God,
tinkle hoy...

"If I
squeeze
Aiko's
hand right
now..."



But there
was no
need to
chant it
anymore.
Now he
just turned
up.



Here!

"Actually,
she might
let me
smooch
her..."

"...or even
let me see,
you know,
inside her
underwear."

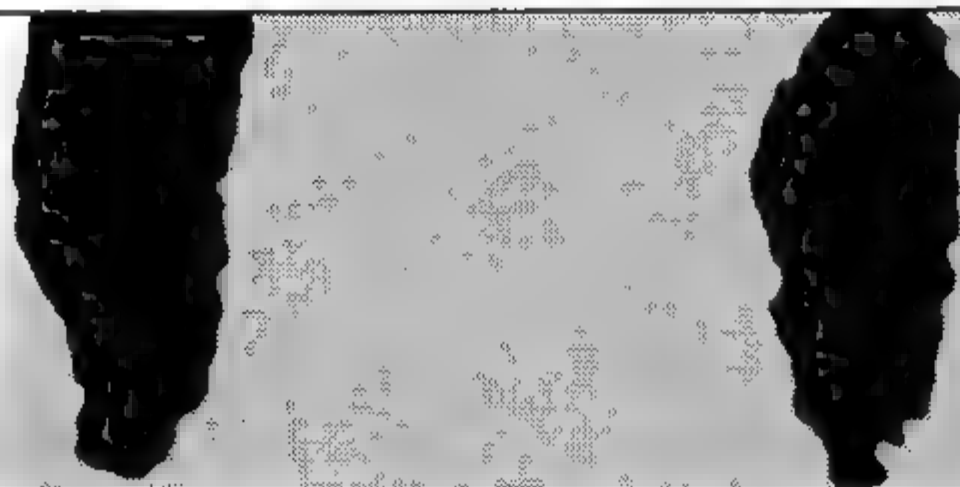


"...she
might
forgive
me for not
keeping
my promise
back then."

Yo,
yo.



"...she
loves
me
again."



"She
might
tell me..."

He was
nothing
if not
logical.

...and to
ignore that
and make
a move on
Aiko now
would make
Punpun a
snake.

Punpun had
a bet or
promise or
whatever
it was with
Yaguchi...

But
here's
the
thing...



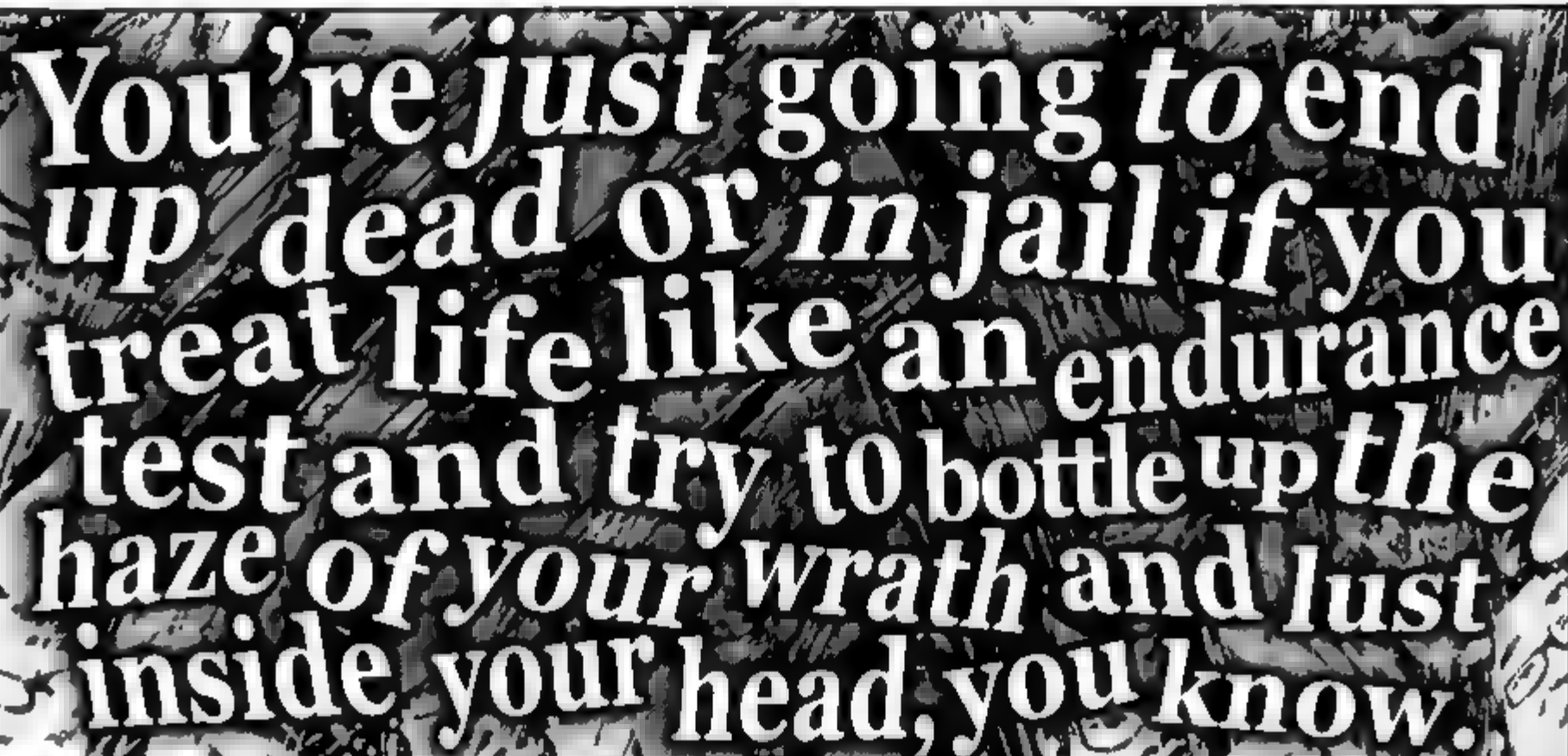


Hey, Punpun,
maybe it's
time *to* stop
playing at
being a good
person?



...he
may be
right.

Yes...

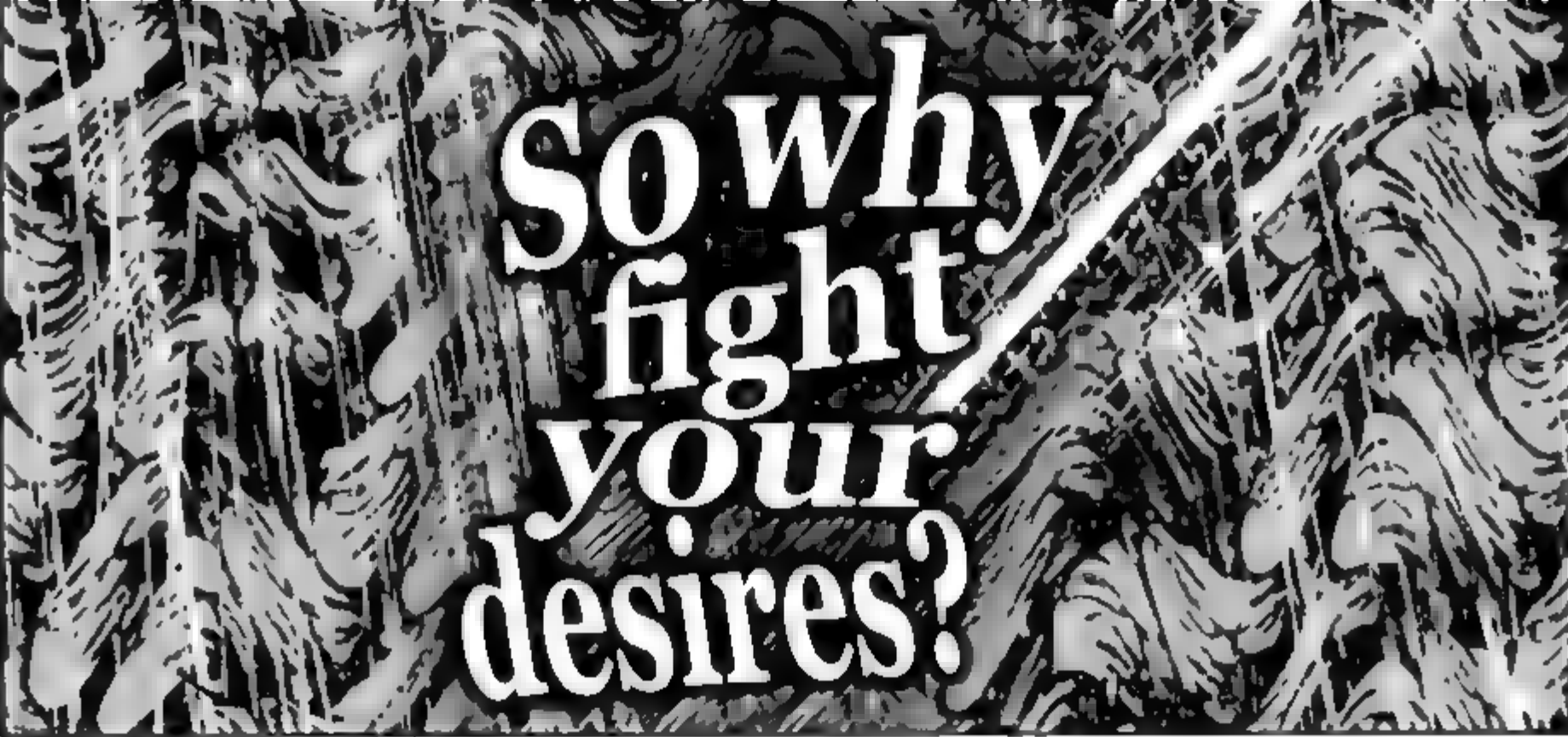


You're *just* going *to* end
up dead or *in* jail if you
treat life like an endurance
test and try to bottle *up* *the*
haze of *your* wrath and lust
inside your head, you know.




...some-
thing
dark and
heavy
in his
heart...

Punpun
felt...

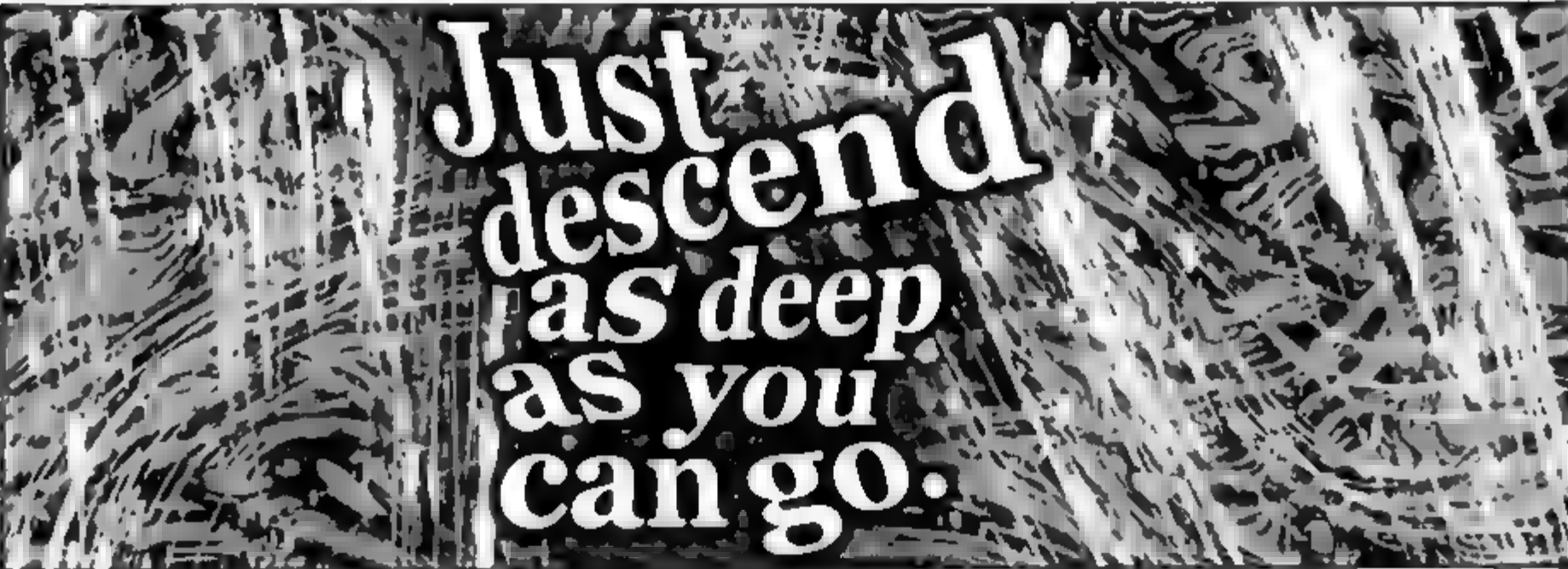


So why fight your desires?




...was a
powerful
sensation
Punpun
had never
encoun-
tered
before.

The
darkness
that was
spreading
so
quickly...

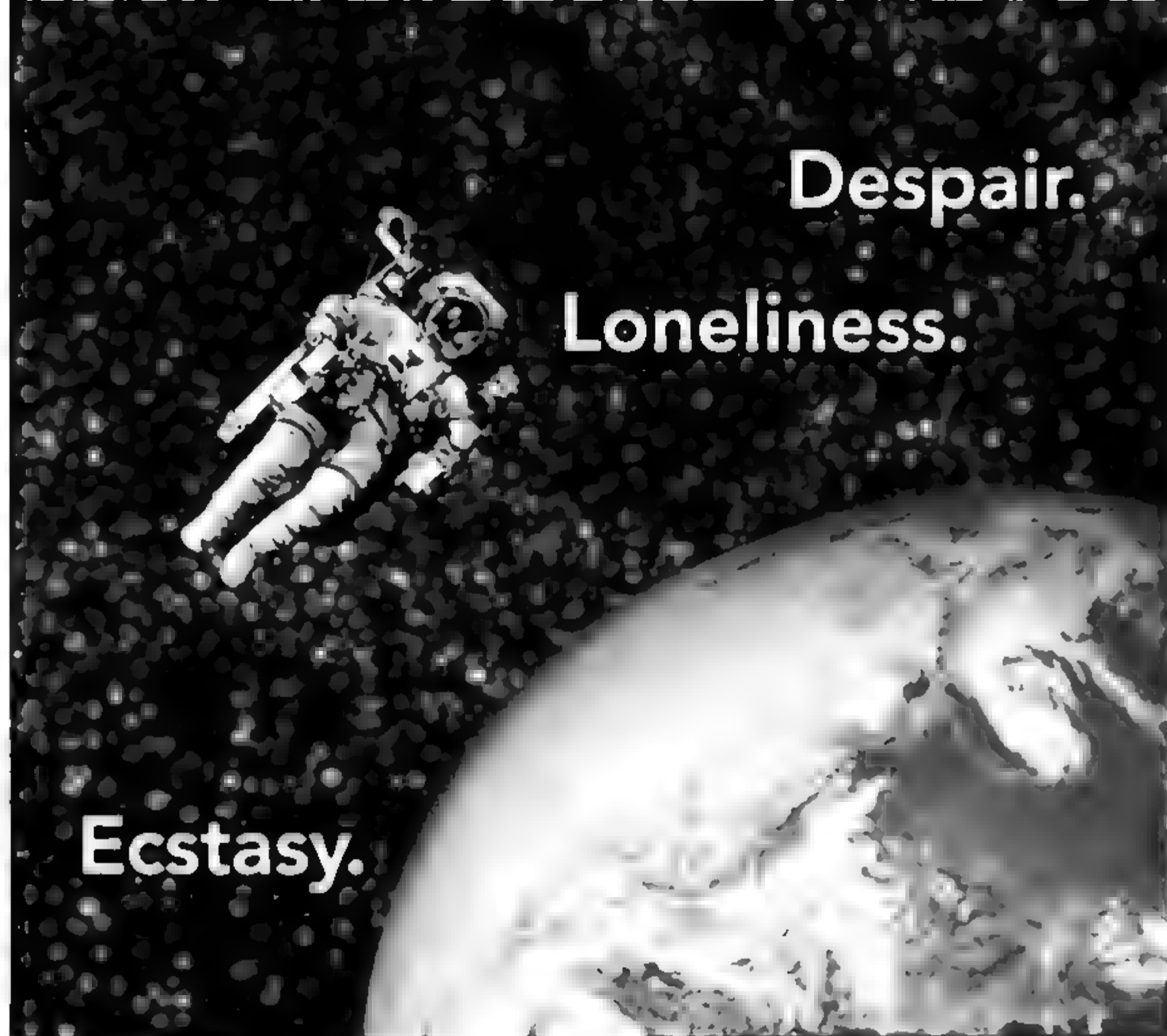


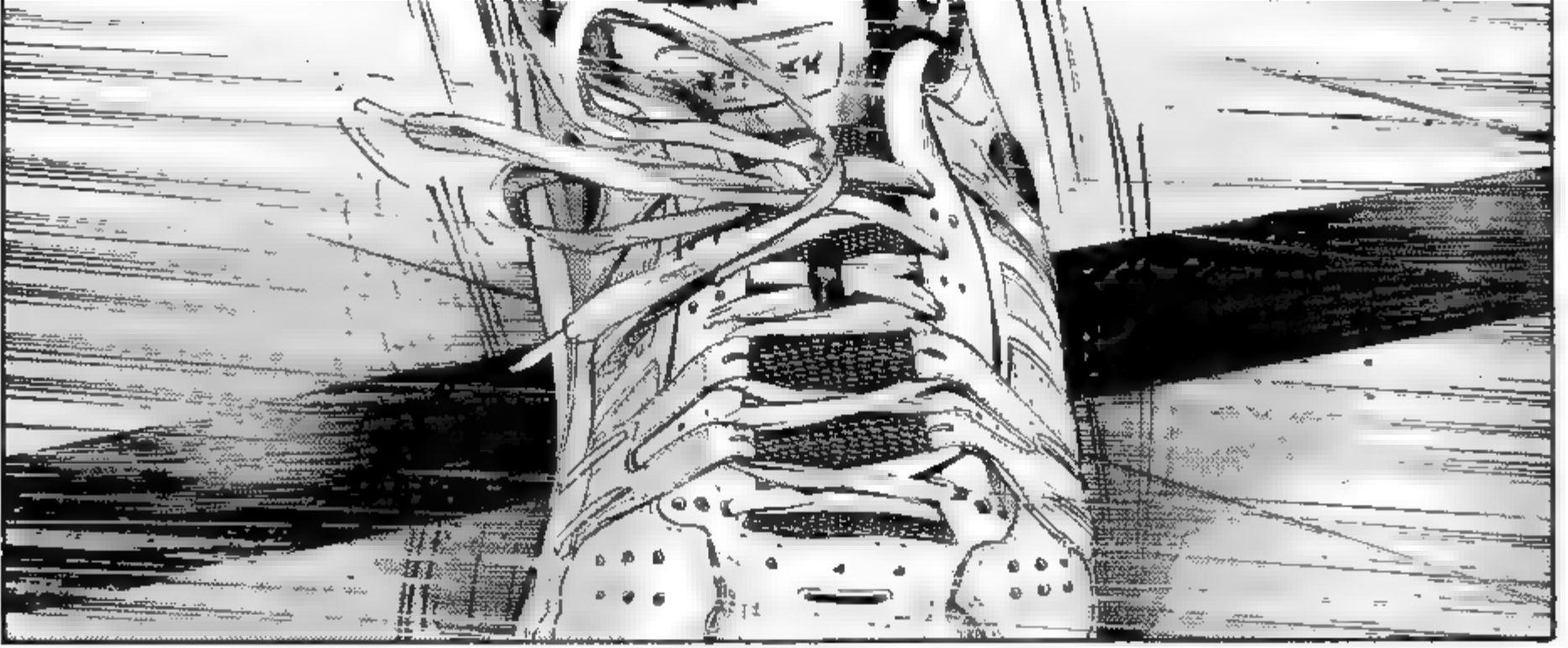
Just descend as deep as you can go.



...he was
floating
aimlessly
in space.

It
felt
like...





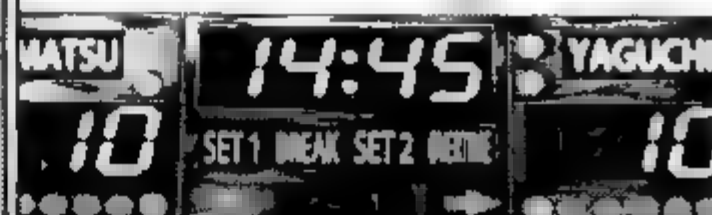


OH
...

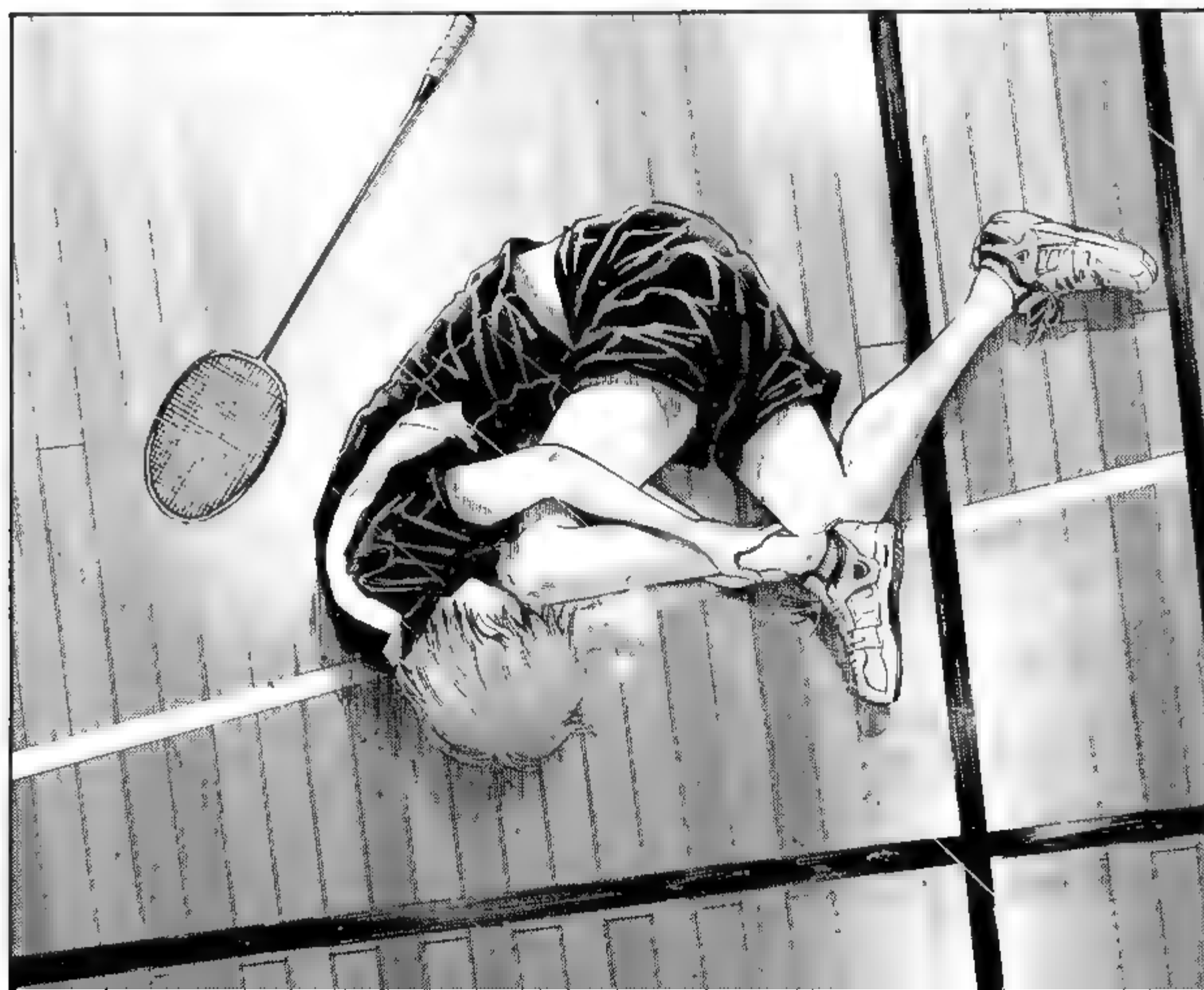
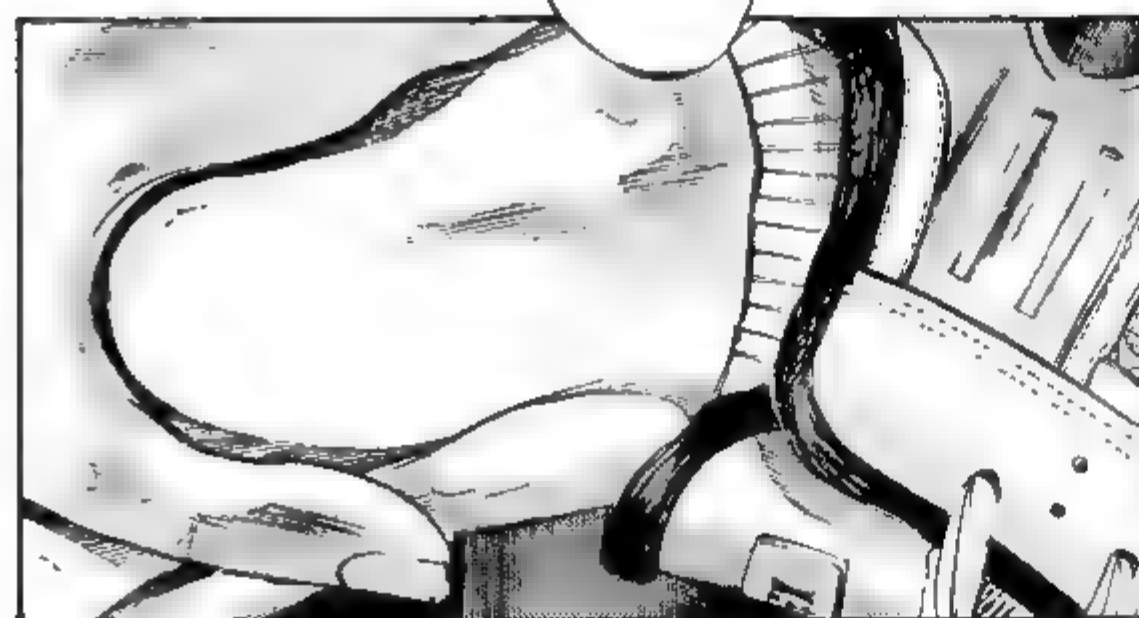
...HE
FELL.

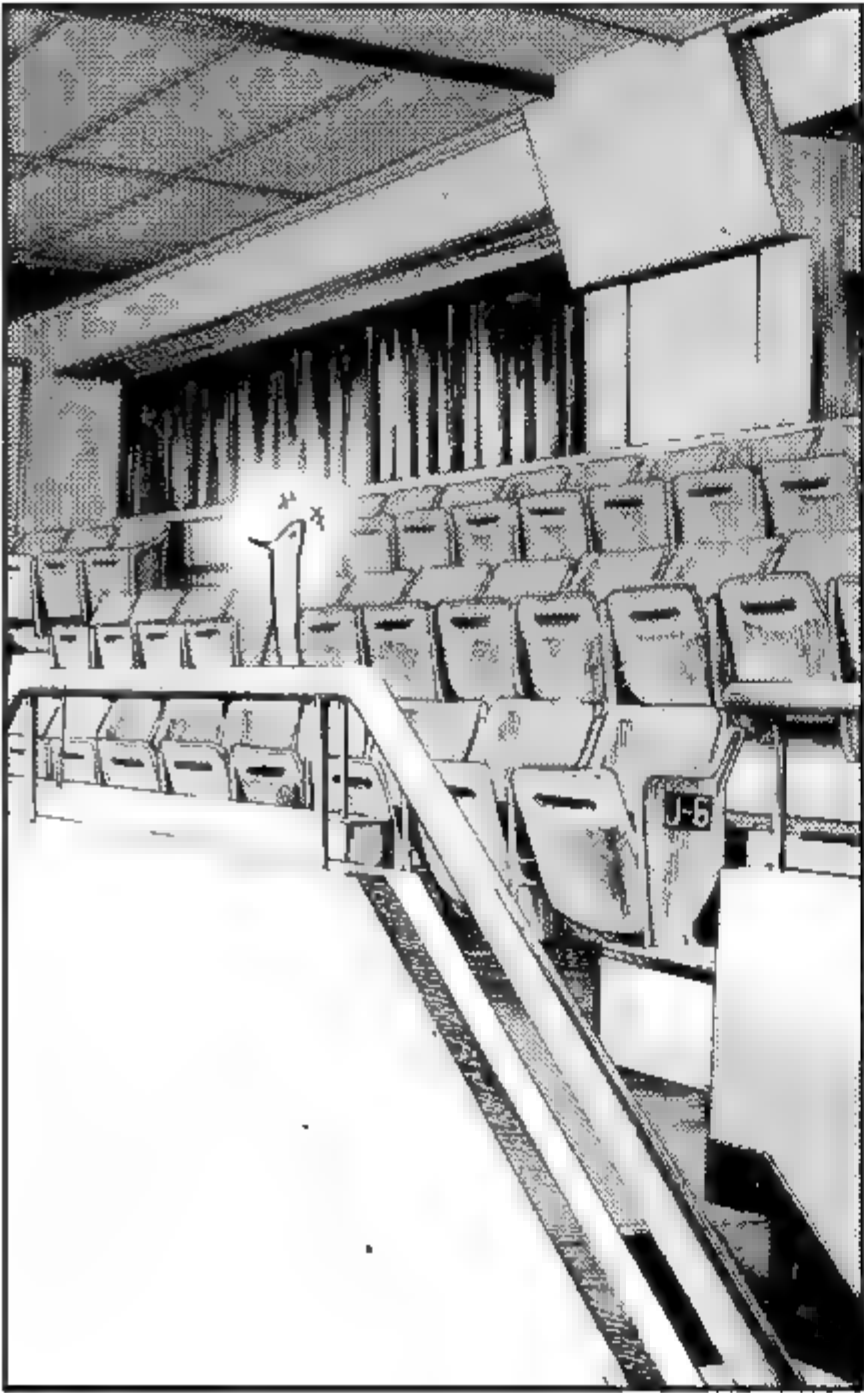


DID
YOU...

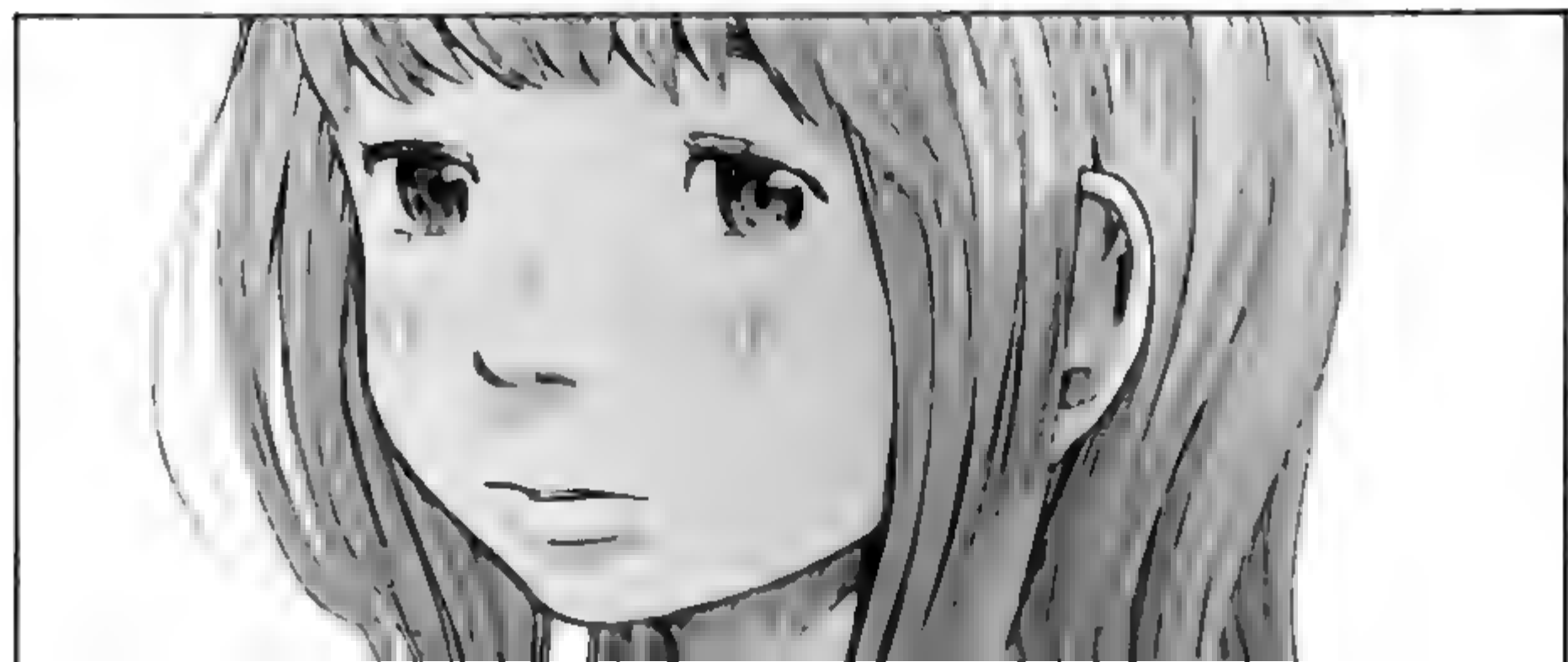


...JUST
HEAR
SOME-
THING
FUNNY?











CHRONIC INFLAMMATION OF THE ACHILLES TENDON...?

WHY DIDN'T YOU SAY SOMETHING?

NO WONDER HE WAS FAVORING HIS RIGHT LEG.



THERE WAS STILL THE PREFECTURE TOURNAMENT...

HE HAD NO REASON TO PUSH SO HARD TO WIN THIS MATCH.

YAGUCHI IS DONE.



YOU MUST HAVE PUT SUDDEN STRESS ON YOUR LEFT SIDE.

IF YOUR TENDON IS SEVERED, YOU'RE LOOKING AT A MINIMUM OF TWO MONTHS IN A CAST.



YOU DID A GREAT JOB, MAMORU!

I'M SO PROUD OF YOU.



**DON'T
TOUCH
ME!**



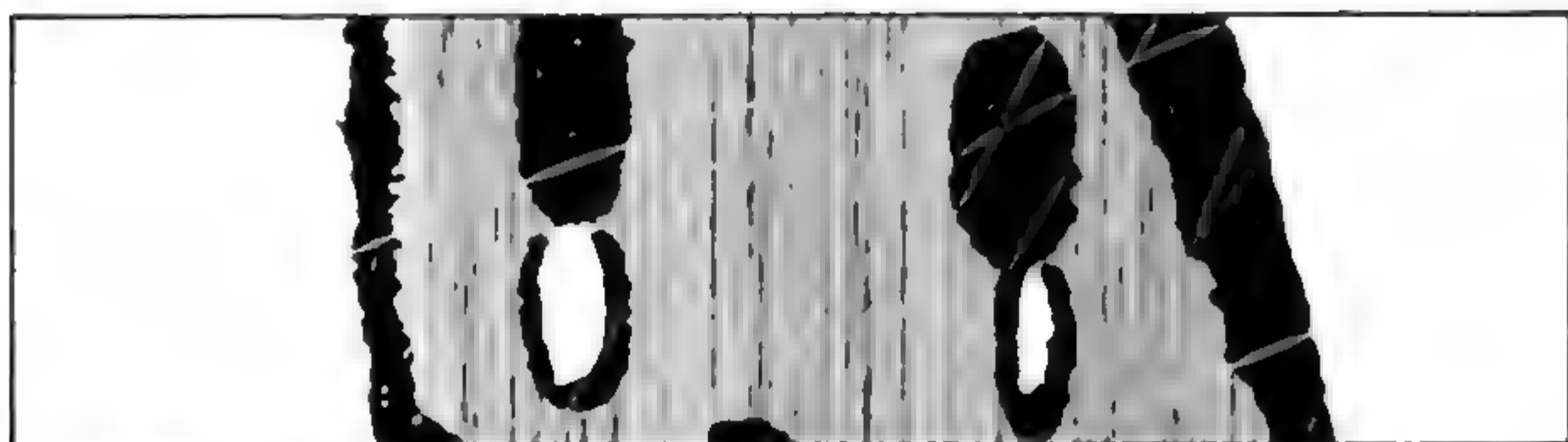
ONODERA.



I...

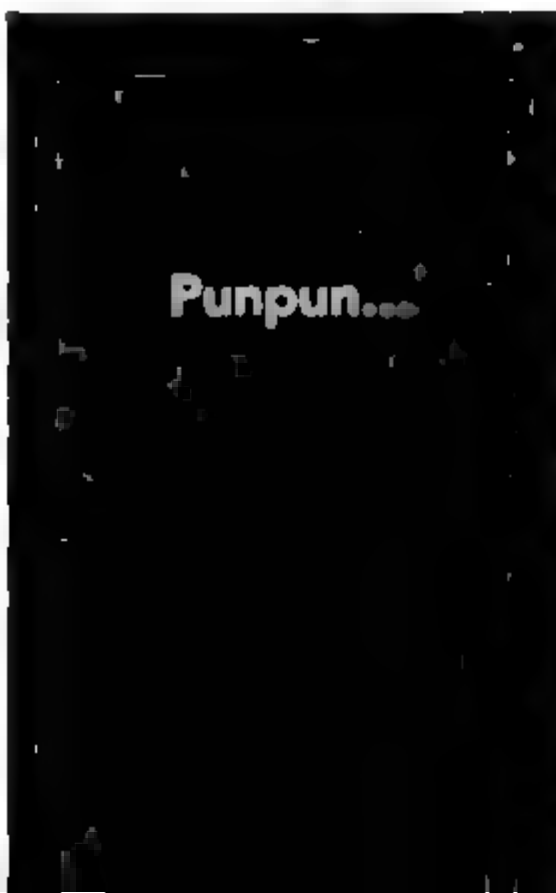
...I
LOST.

HA
HA.





I'LL
GO WITH
YAGUCHI
TO THE
HOSPITAL.



YOU
WANT
TO STOP
AT AN
ARCADE
ON THE
WAY
HOME?

ONCE
YOU'VE
CLEANED
UP HERE,
THE REST
OF YOU
CAN GO.



...wasn't
even
remotely
happy.

...for
some
reason...

It
was too
much for
Punpun.

...he felt
like he had
robbed
Yaguchi of
something
precious.

In
fact...

Punpun
was a sly
one.

Pretending
to be a good
person, even
inside his
own head...

No,
that's
not
true.



PUNPUN.



...there
was
another
Punpun
living in
his head.

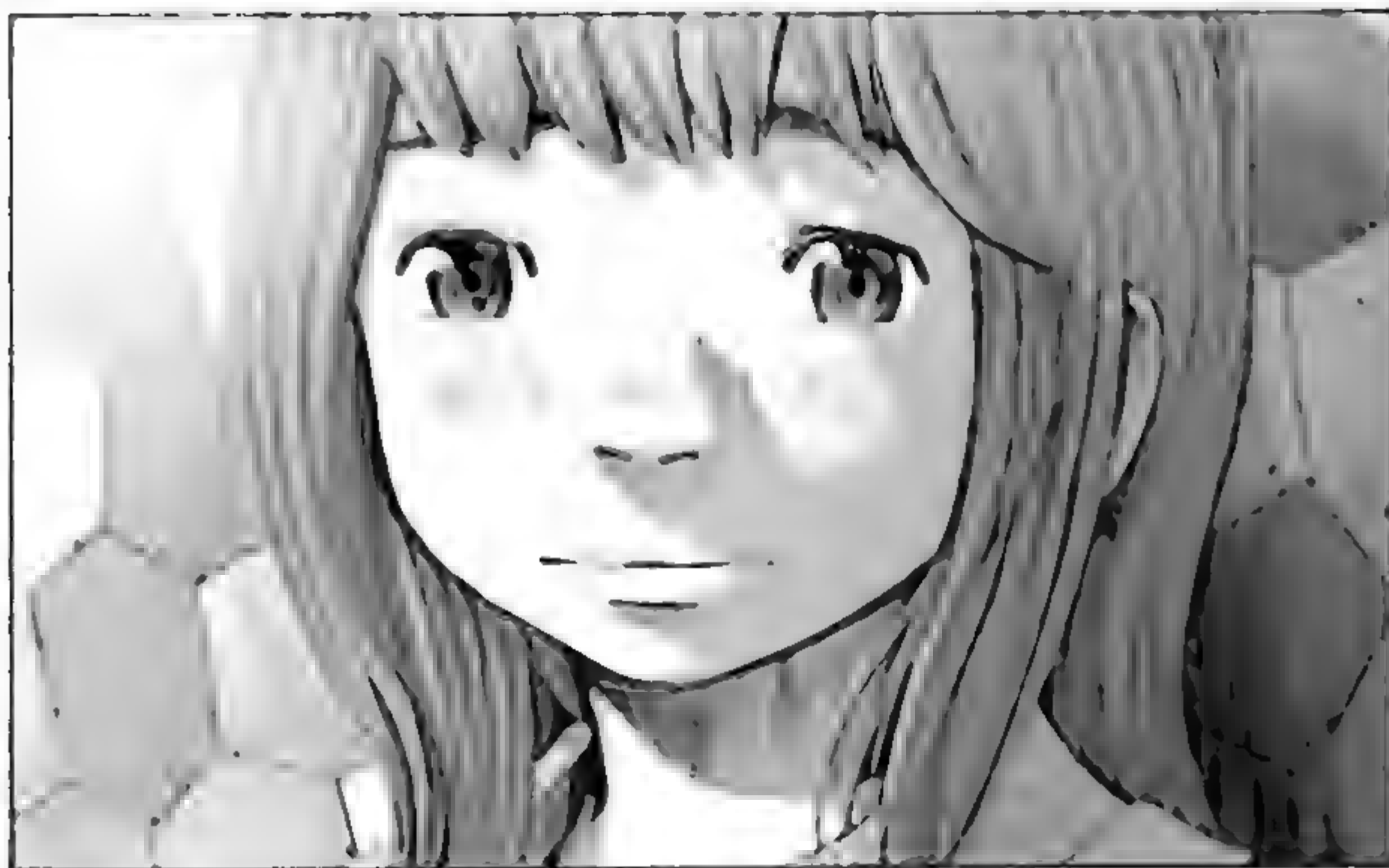
It
was
as
if...



ARE
YOU
GOING
HOME?

...to the
quick
high he'd
gotten
from
betraying
and
defeating
Yaguchi.

He
didn't
want to
admit...



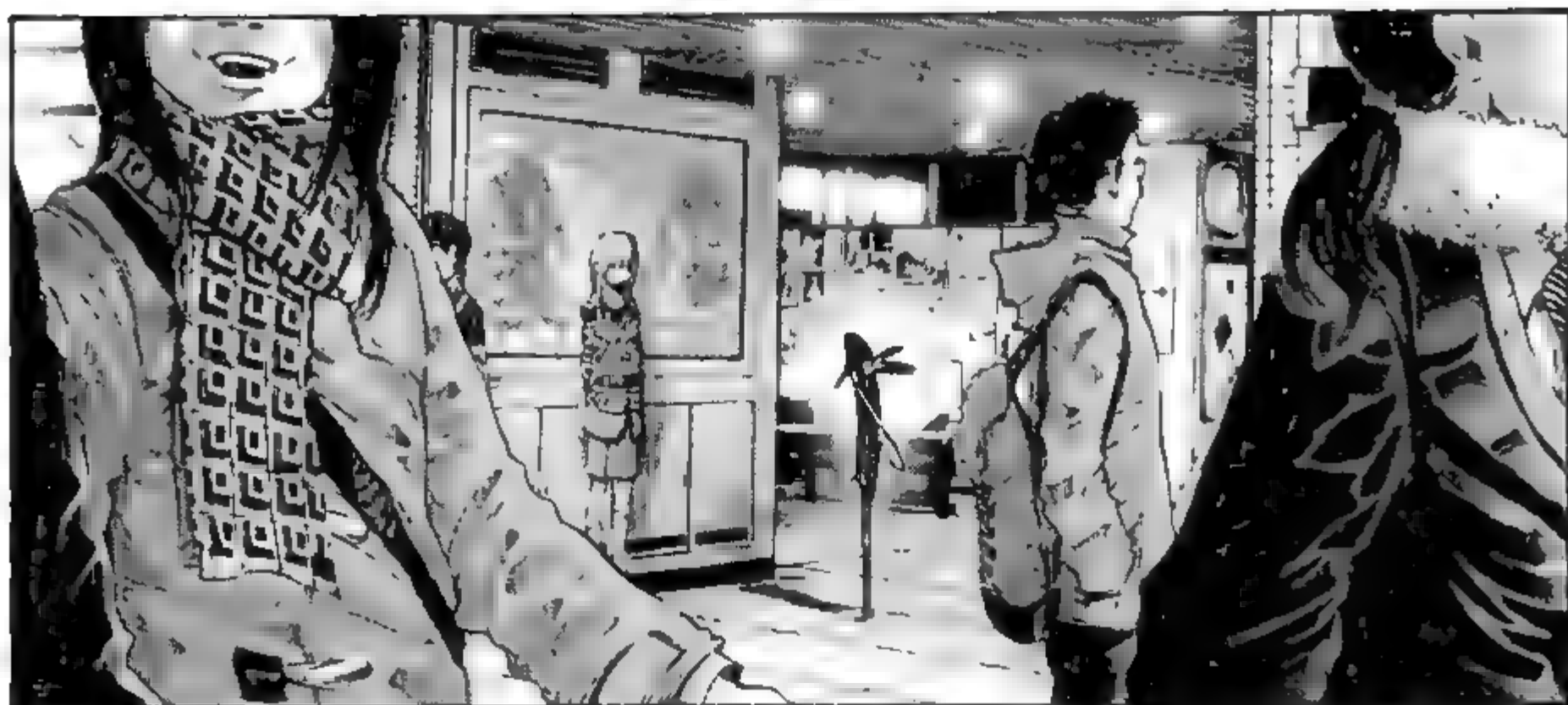
...looked
like a
filthy
animal.

He was
sure his
reflection in
Aiko's wide,
gorgeous
eyes...



"...to go to
Kagoshima
with you
that day."

"I'm
really sorry
I couldn't
keep my
promise..."



...that he
had wanted
to say that
for two
years.

Punpun
finally
understood...

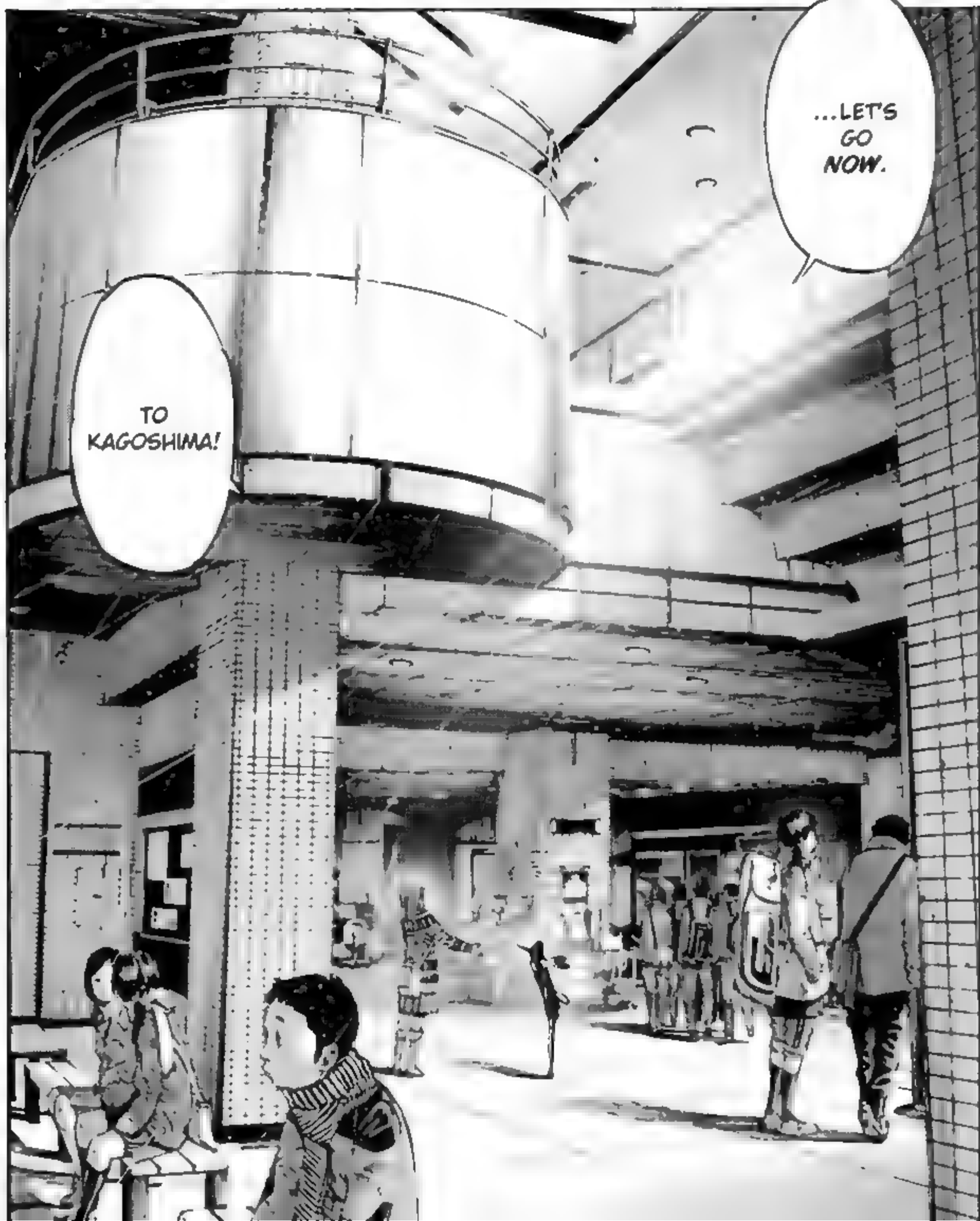


IT
DOESN'T
BOTHER
ME AT
ALL.

DON'T

Worry
ABOUT

"Aiko is
smiling."





Punpun
was...

...he
would
plummet...

...into an
abysmal
darkness
and never
stop
falling.

...YOU
DON'T LIE,
RIGHT?

PUNPUN...

If he
took
even
one step
towards
Aiko...

How
could he
explain
it?



So
Punpun
strained
to say...



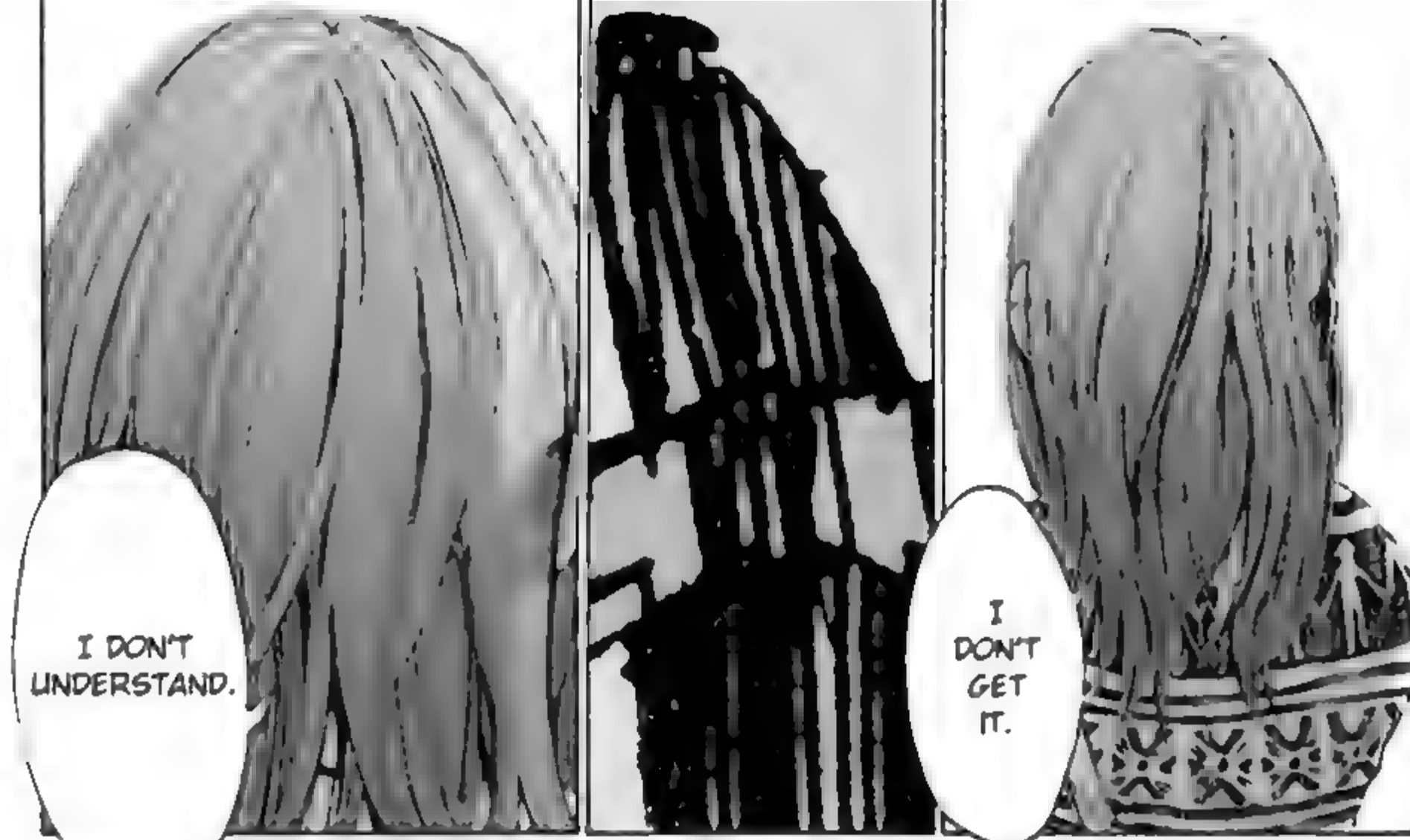
WHY?

"Go see
Yaguchi."



WHY?

"Yaguchi
needs
you right
now."



...was too
scared to
look back.

Punpun...



...to high-
light how
dirty he'd
become.

...was
how last
night's
snow was
a back-
drop...

...the one
thing that
was clear
to
Punpun...

For
now...



PUNPUN.

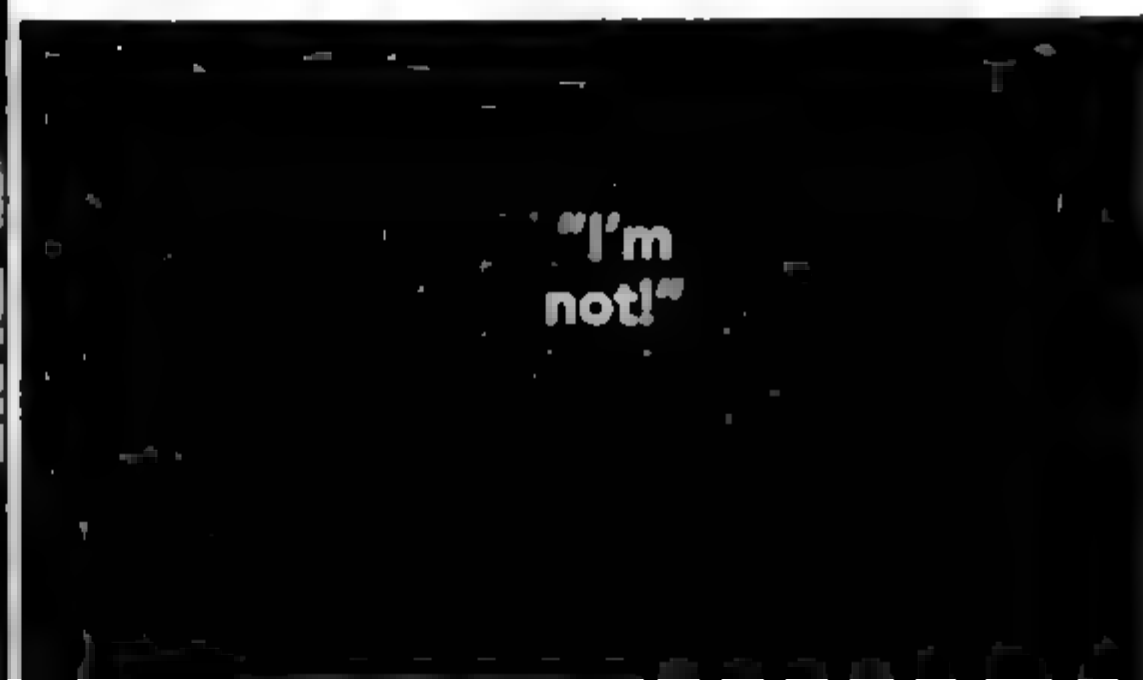
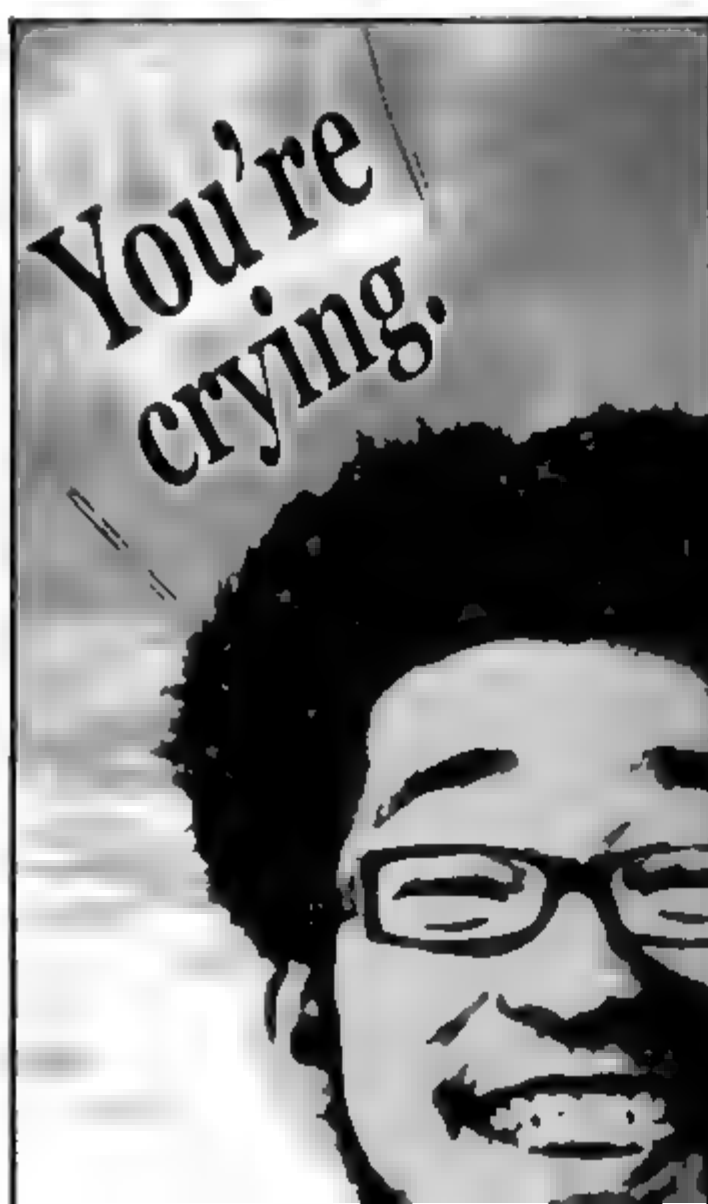
BESTIALITY
OR
NECROPHILIA,
WHICH WOULD
YOU RATHER
DO?

...and
disap-
pear.

...every-
thing
could
melt into
this clean
white
snow...

If
only...



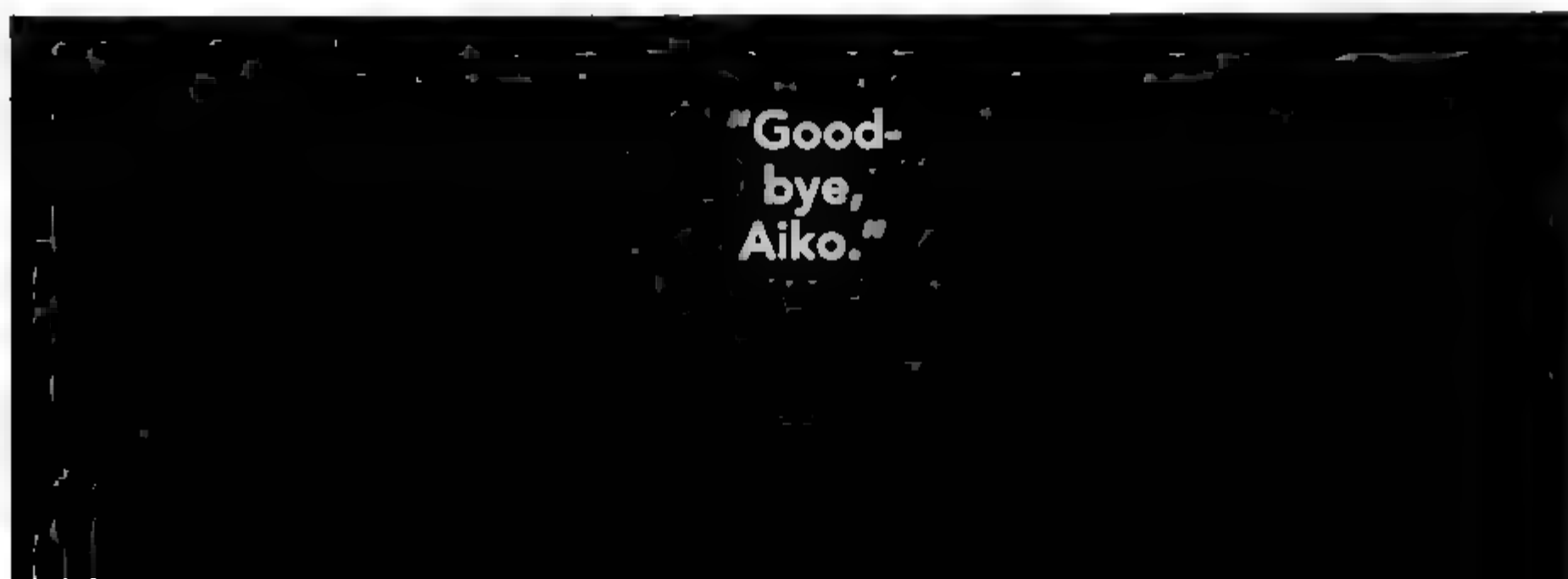
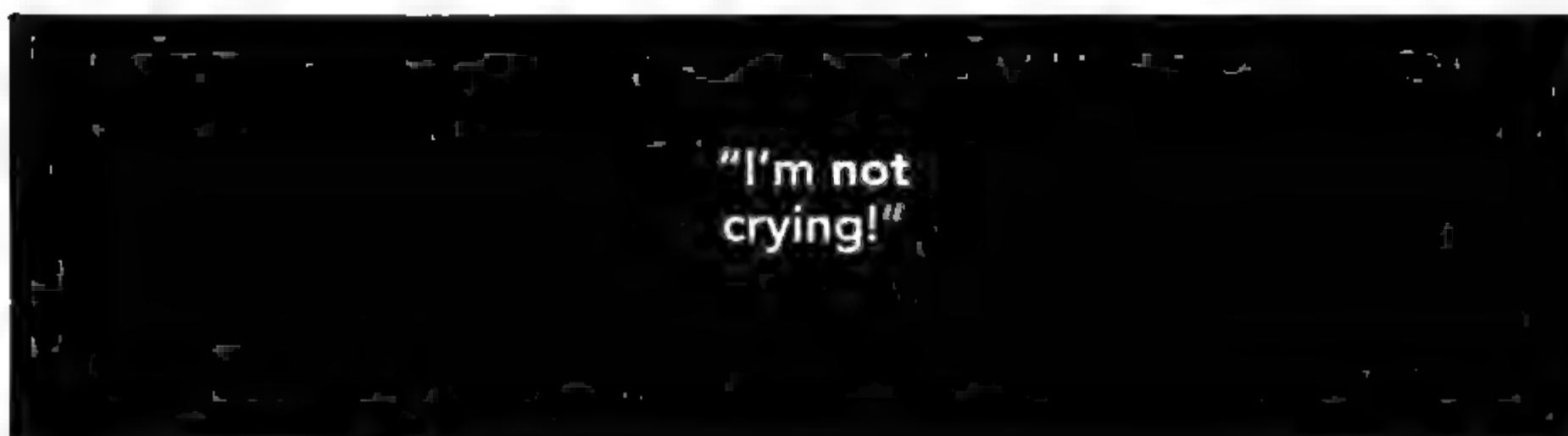


GOODNIGHT PUNPUN

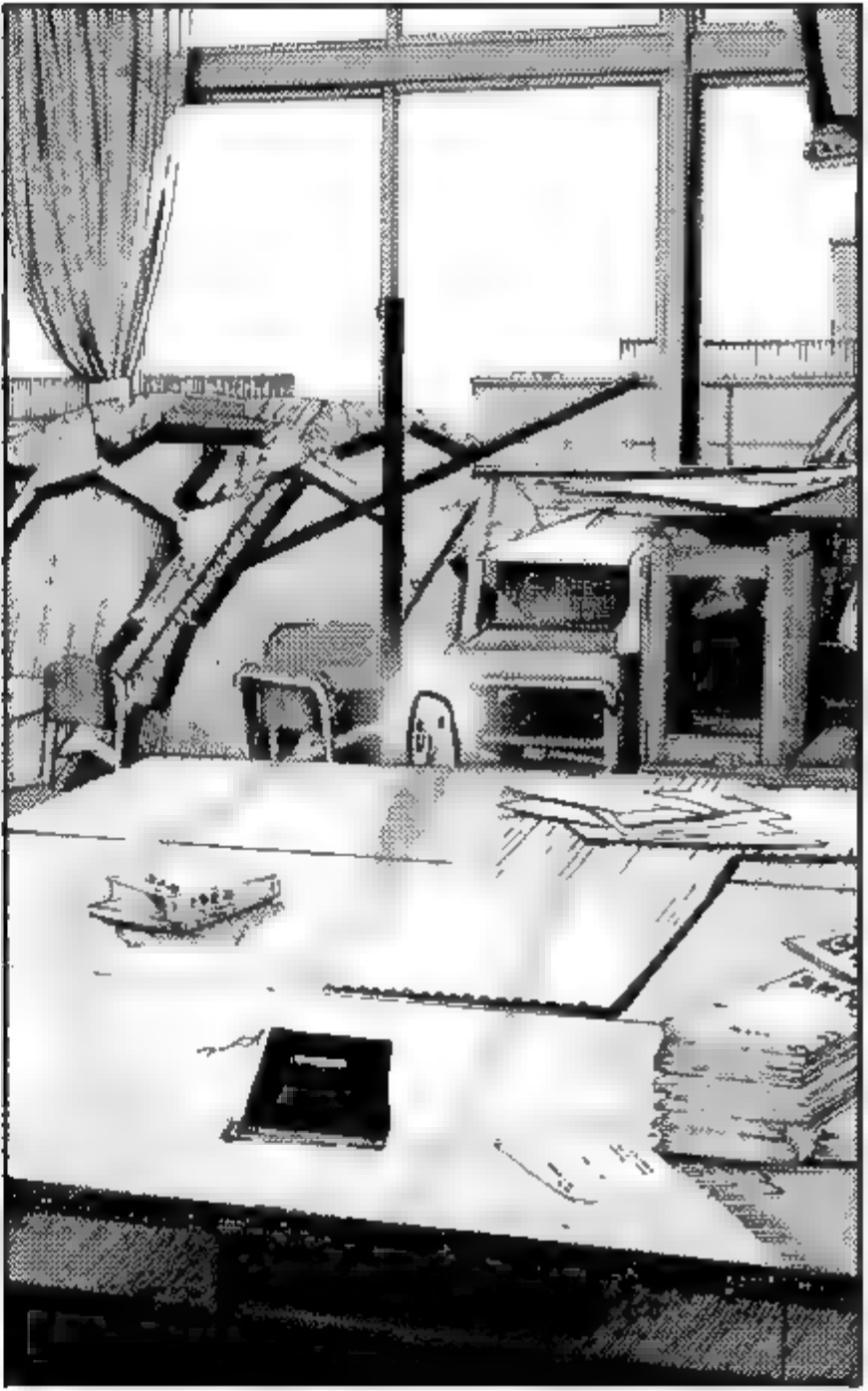
Part Four

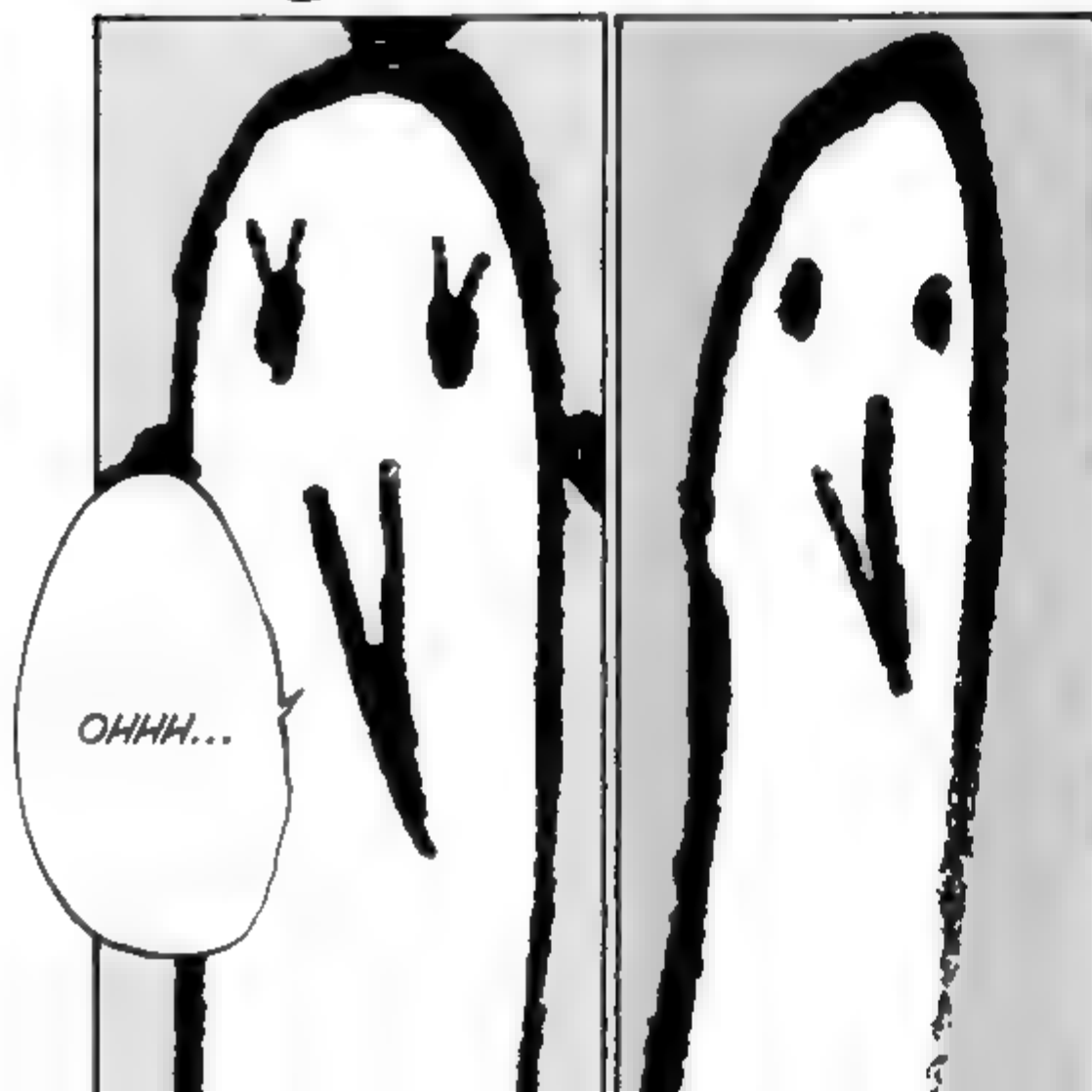
INIO ASANO















AND THEN
WHEN I'M A
SENILE OLD
LADY, YOU
CAN WIPE
MY ASS
FOR ME!

WHAT
ARE YOU
TALKING
ABOUT?
YOU'RE
STILL IN
YOUR
THIRTIES.

MIDORI,
YOU LIVE
WITH YOUR
FOLKS,
RIGHT...?

WHY
DON'T
YOU JUST
MOVE IN
HERE?



I'M
FEELING
SUPER
WONDER-
FUL!

AAAAAGH!

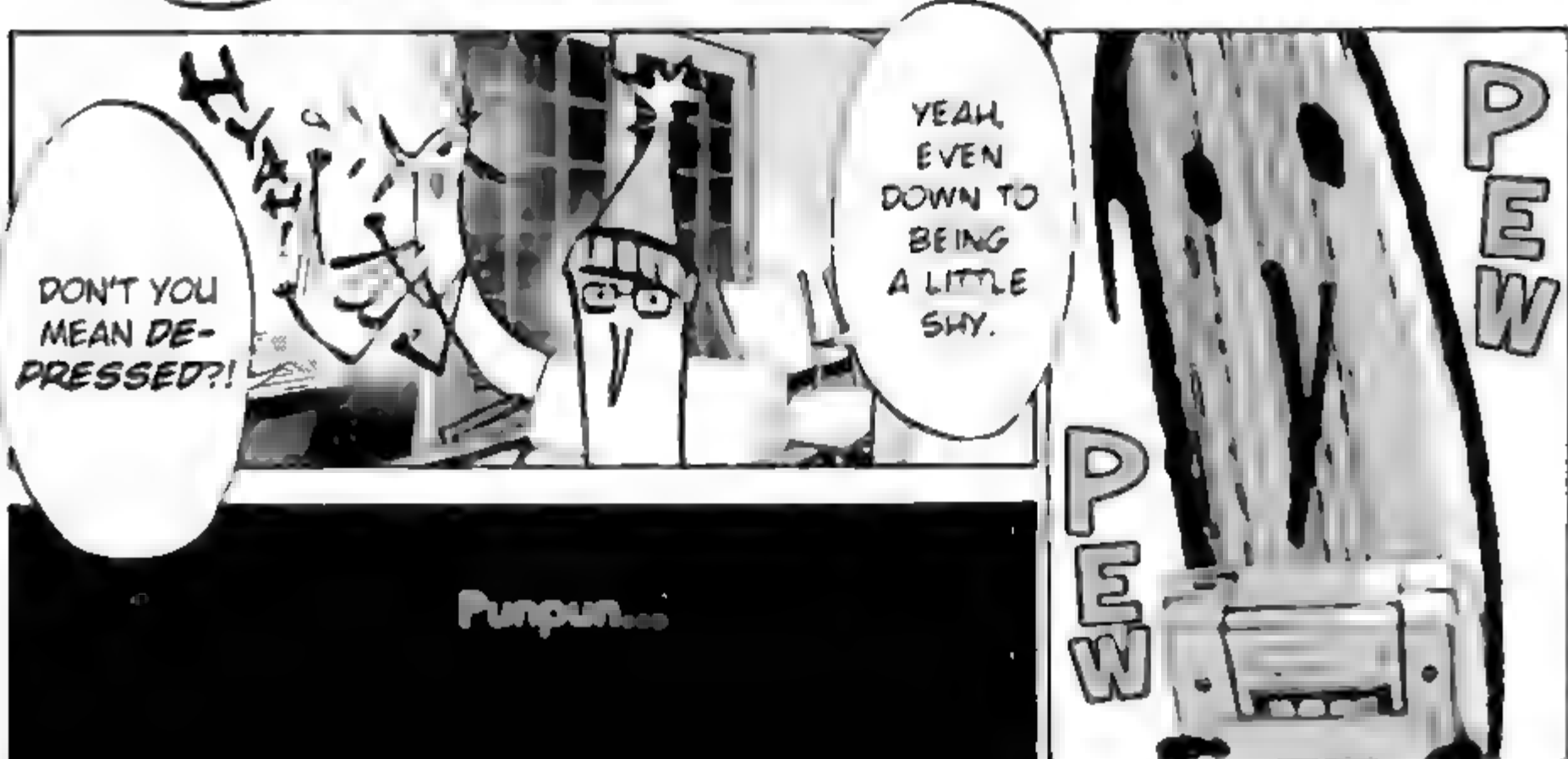


U
H
I
C
I

NICE
TO MEET
YOU.



UM...
I'M
MIDORI
OKUMA.



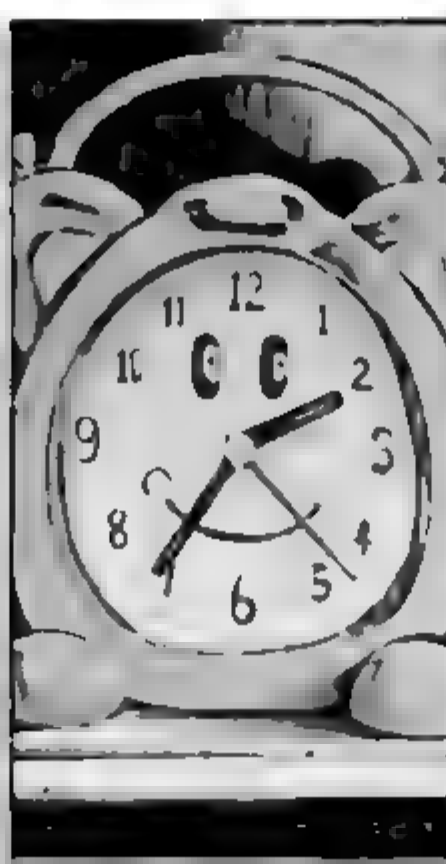


...had been feeling odd the last few days.



...every night he'd had the same dream.

Ever since the tournament...





**you
can't
walk
away
from
them?**

**Are
your
dreams
so
worthy
that**

WHEN I
TURN
FORTY,
I'M GOING
TO GET MY
WHOLE
BODY
TUCKED.



**you'll
regret
aban-
doning
them?**

**Is
your
family
so
wonder-
ful
that**

**So
you only
really
have
two
choices—**

**People die,
no matter
what kind
of life they
live. The bit
at the end is
the same
for
everyone.**

**That's
it.**

**Will
you,
or
won't
you
...?**





He suspected it would be better if everyone in the world just forgot about him.

He didn't want to talk to anyone.

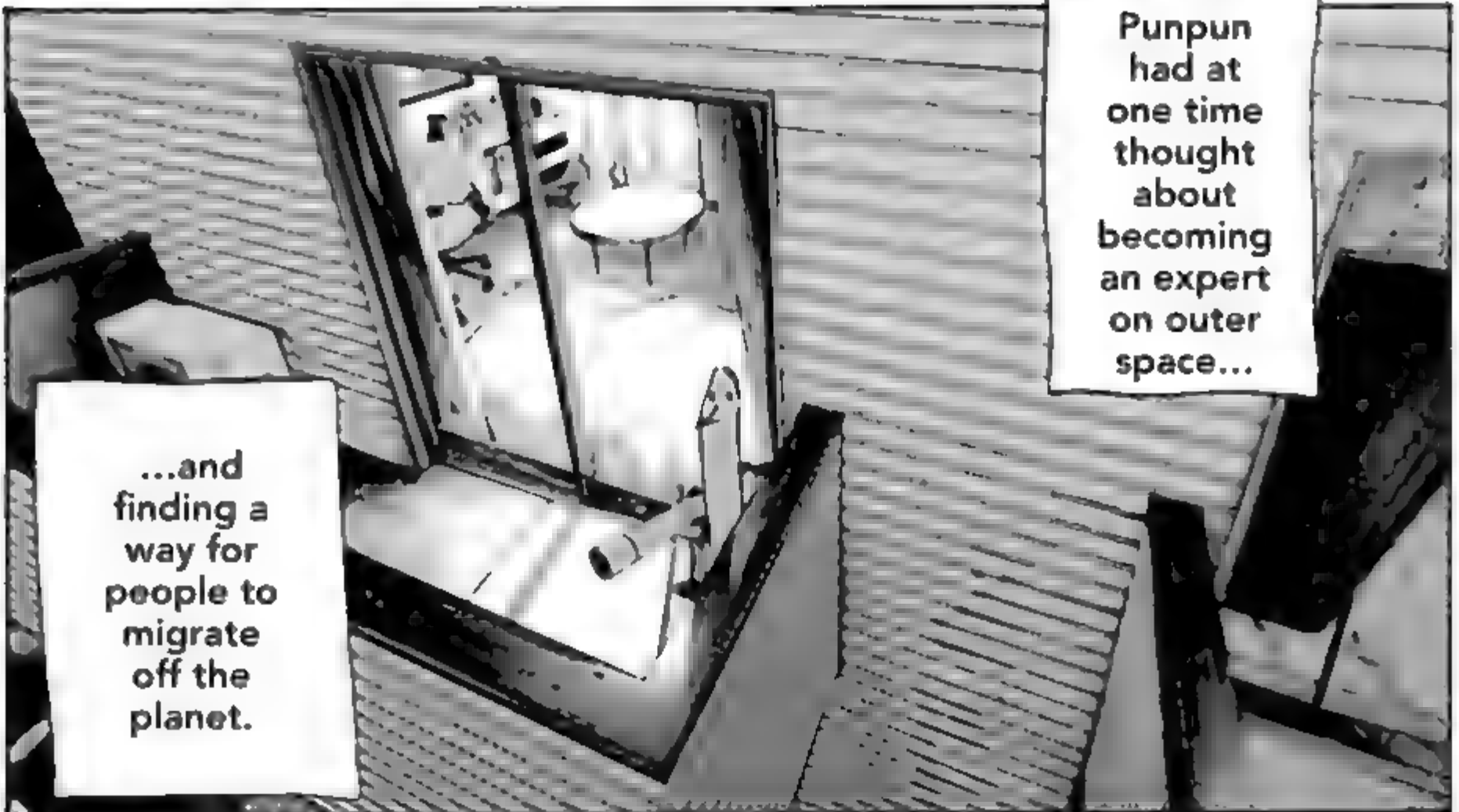
He didn't want to hurt anyone.





"We'll run out of oil,
the environment will
be destroyed
and Earth will be
uninhabitable.
It'll be over
for humanity."

Punpun
remembered
something a
girl named Aiko
Tanaka had said
in elementary
school...



...and
finding a
way for
people to
migrate
off the
planet.

Punpun
had at
one time
thought
about
becoming
an expert
on outer
space...

"I was
such a
child back
then."

Now
Punpun
thought...

When Punpun was little, it seemed like he'd be able to touch the stars if he just reached out his hand...

...but now

...they were terribly distant and wouldn't even look at him.



I'M A MAN AT MY SERVICE

IT DOESN'T MATTER

THAT'S NOT WHY I CAME OVER

W-WAT YAKU!



...but maybe not.

Humanity might be done for...

YES

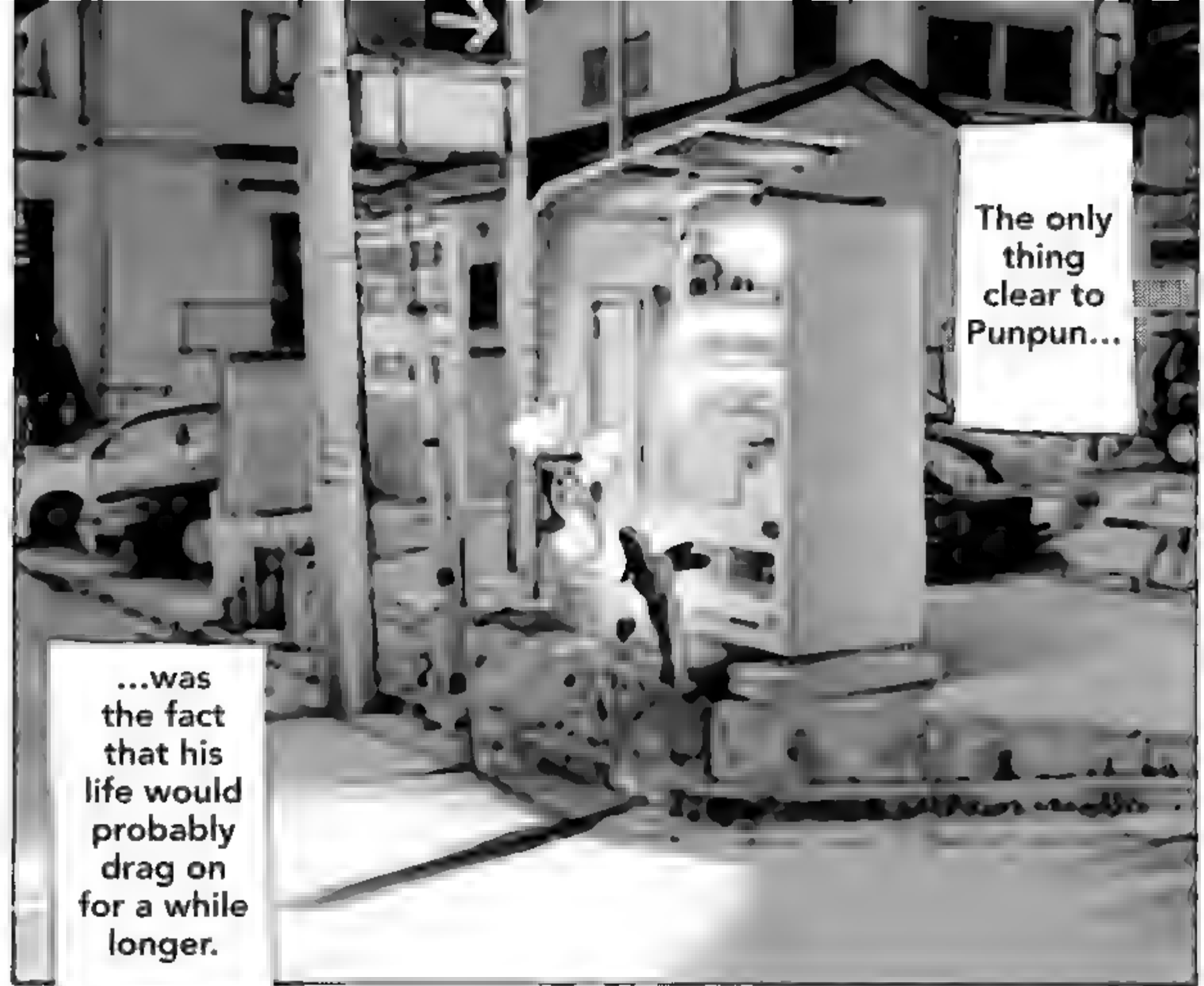


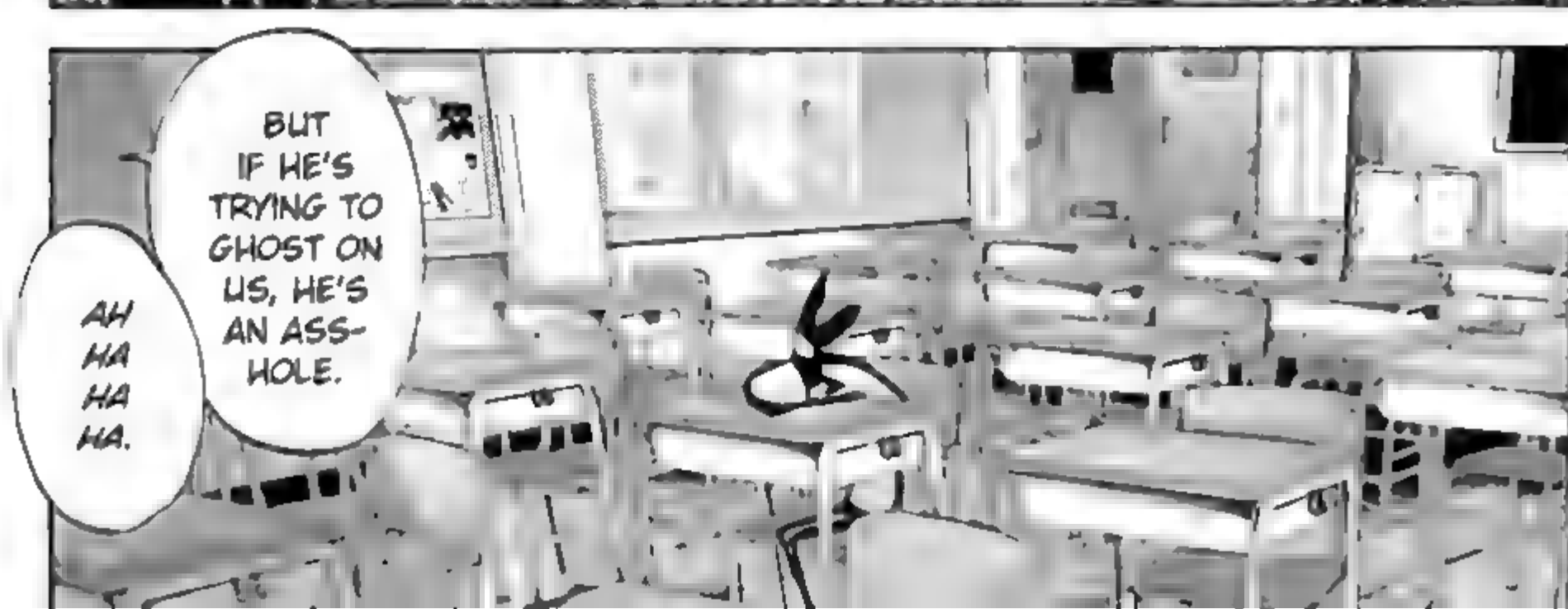
OH

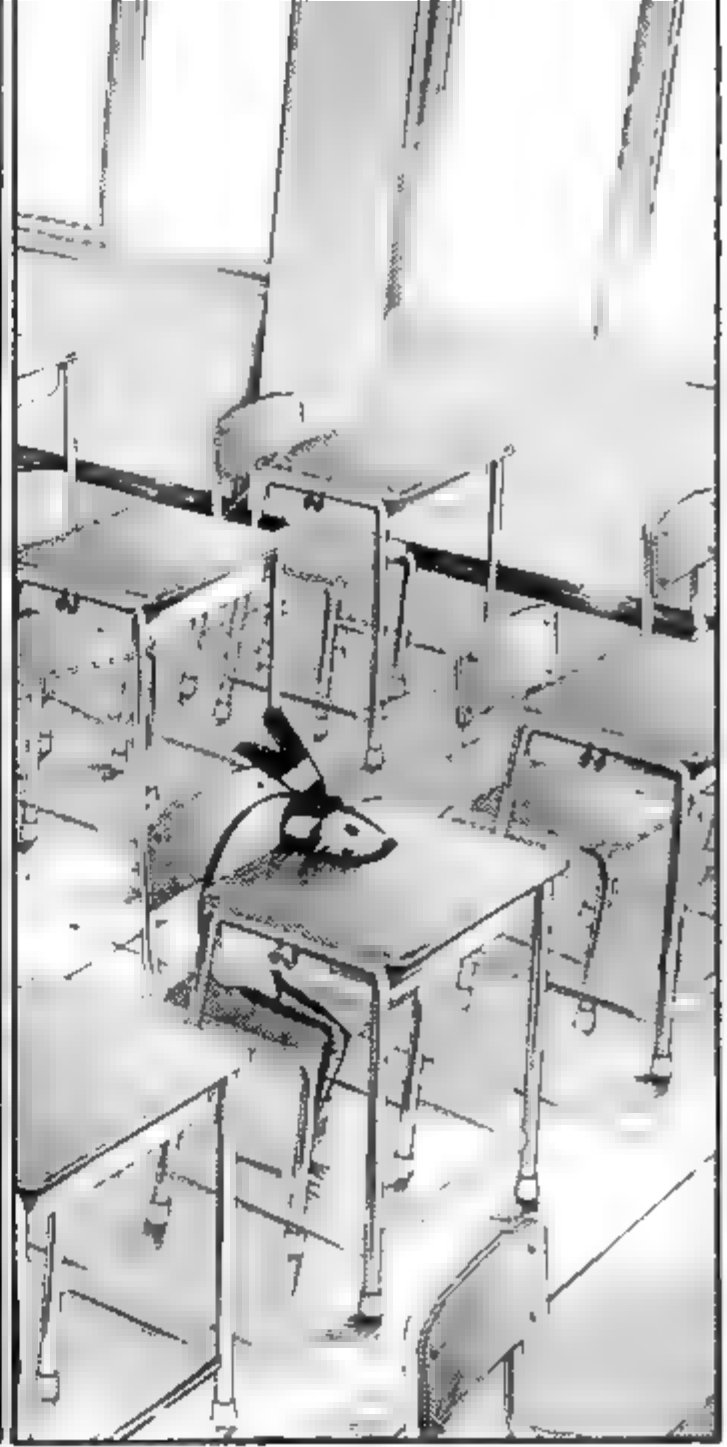
DON'T WORRY THE FMS BOTH ASLEEP



BUT THEY'VE WEAR US THE SUCING DEAR IS REALLY FUNNY







IT'S ONLY
THE THIRD
TERM OF
YOUR FIRST
YEAR. NO
NEED TO BE
IN SUCH A
HURRY.

SOCIAL STUDIES REFERENCE ROOM

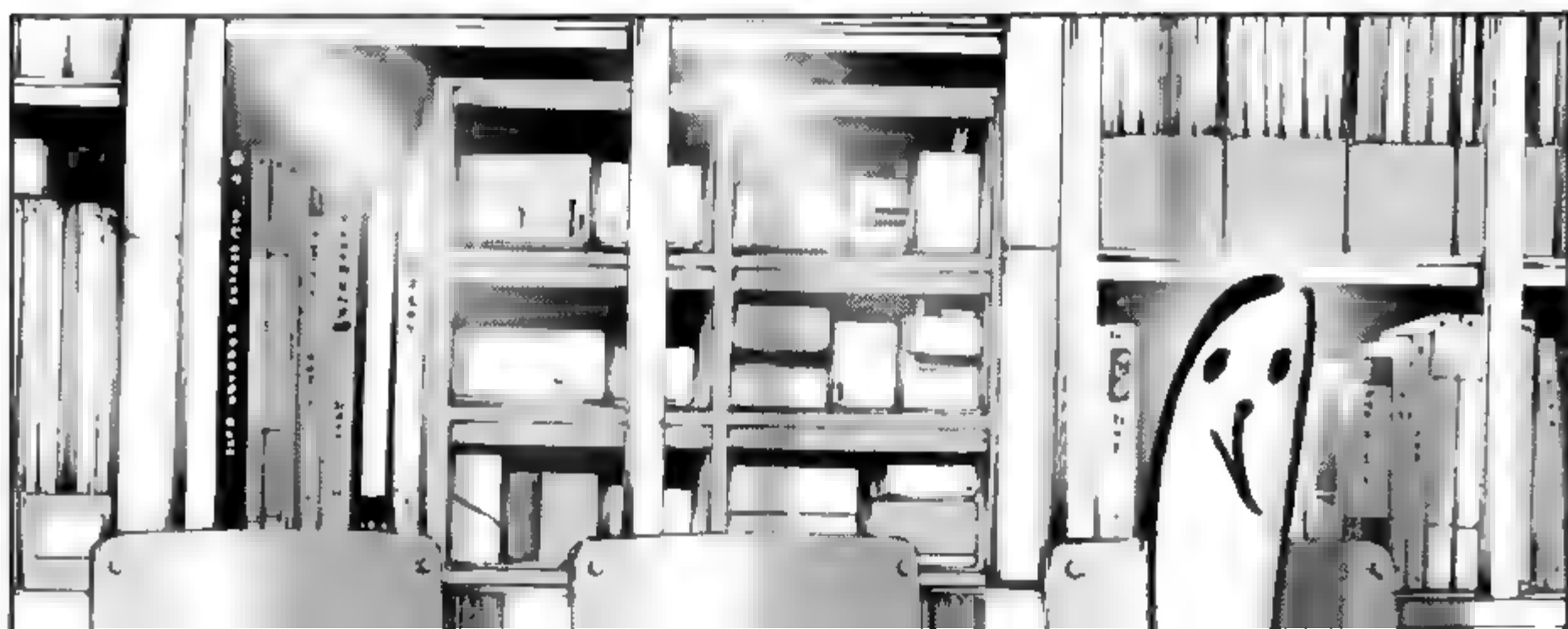
HEY,
SEKI.

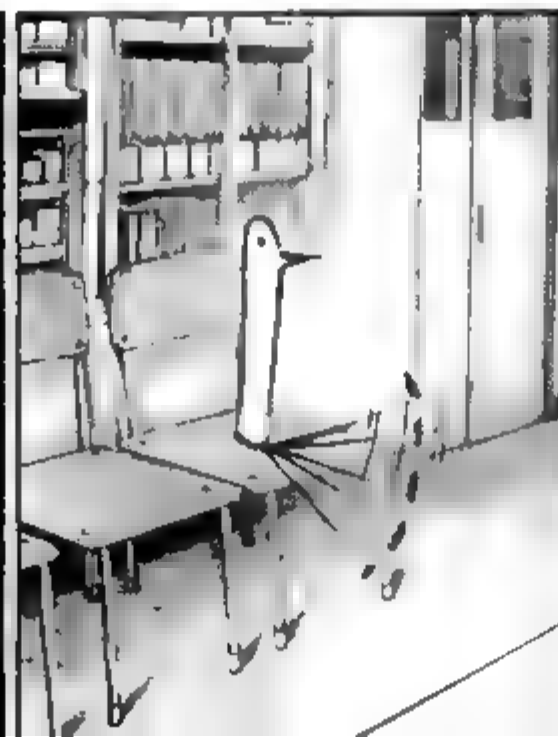
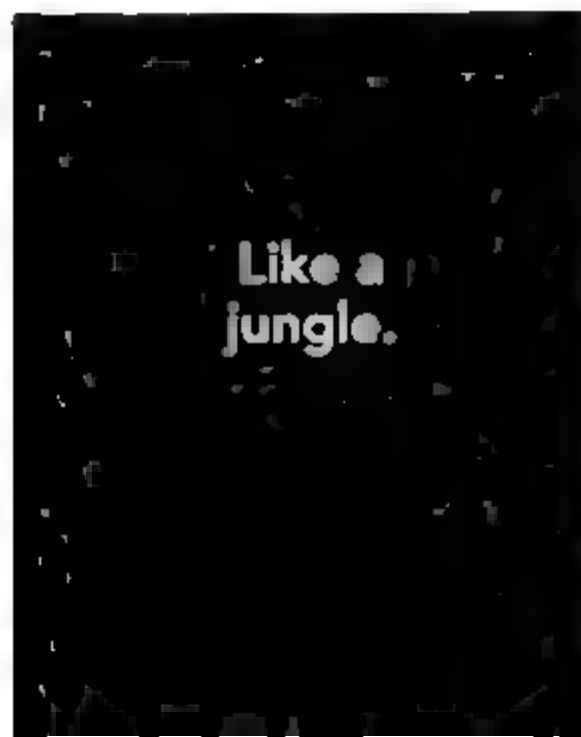
NEVER
MIND, DO
WHAT YOU
WANT.

...I HAVE
ABSOLUTELY
NO
INTEREST
IN GOING
TO HIGH
SCHOOL.

AND I
KEEP
TELLING
YOU...

THAT'S
JUST THE
WRONG KIND OF
ENVIRONMENT
FOR SOMEONE
LIKE ME, DON'T
YOU THINK?

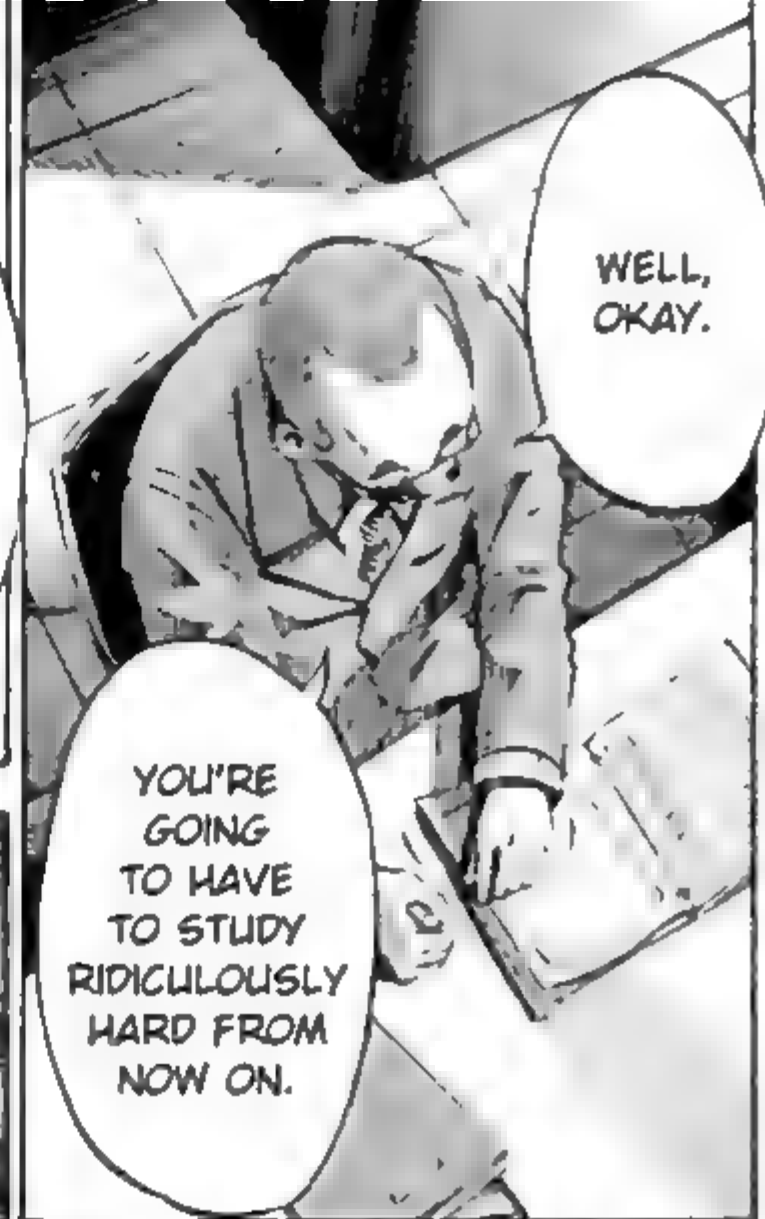






HAVE YOU
DECIDED
ON A NEW
ACTIVITY?

AND I SEE
YOU'RE
QUITTING
BADMINTON?



WELL,
OKAY.

YOU'RE
GOING
TO HAVE
TO STUDY
RIDICULOUSLY
HARD FROM
NOW ON.



BUT YOU
SEEM VERY
SERIOUS AND
NOT LIKE
YOU'RE JUST
KIDDING
AROUND. I
THINK YOU
MAY HAVE
SOME EXPE-
RIENCE...

HOW
ABOUT IT—
WOULD
YOU LIKE
TO PLAY
ME?

WE
CURRENTLY
HAVE TWO
MEMBERS,
AND WE'RE
BARELY
DOING
ANYTHING.

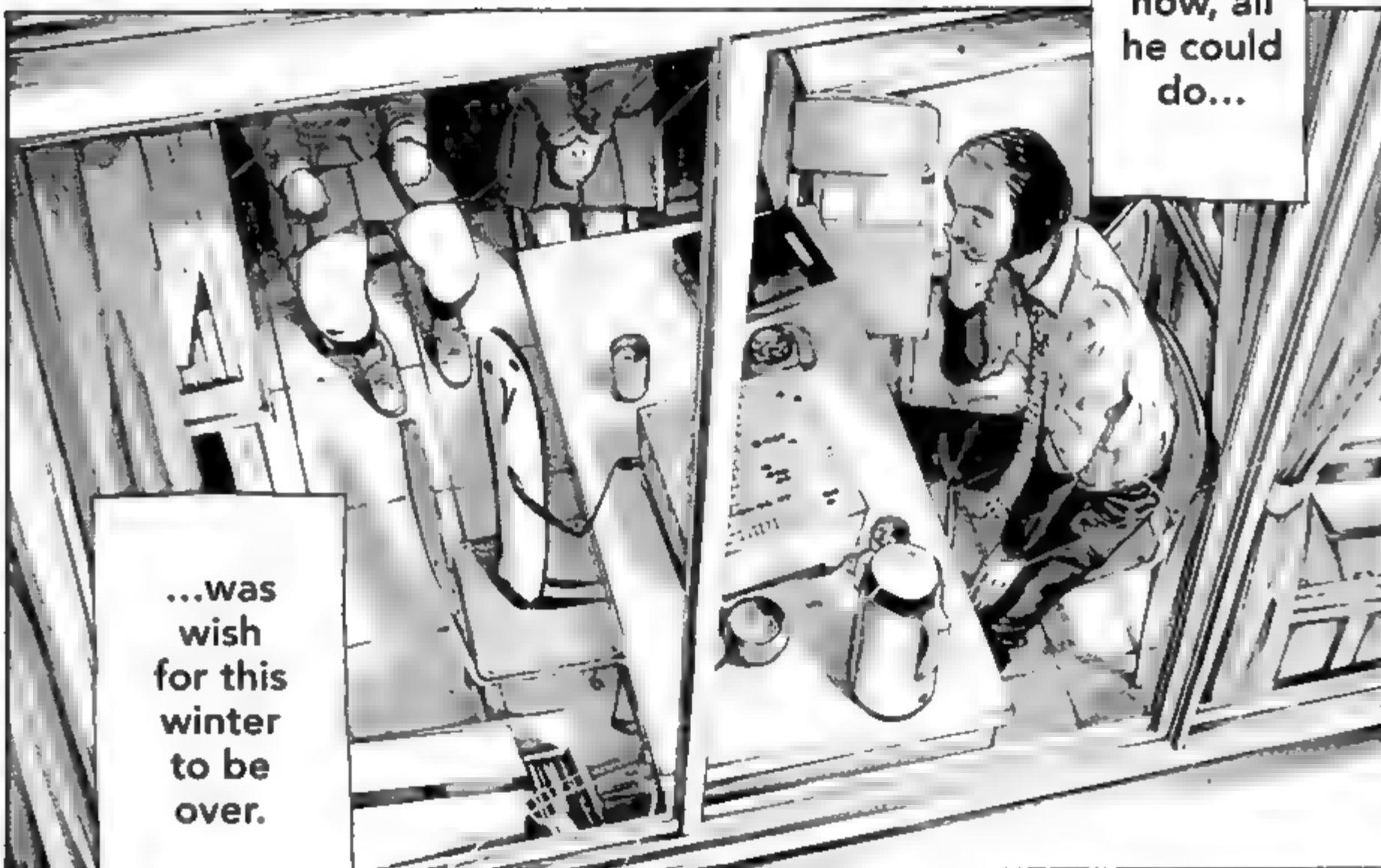
GO
IS REALLY
POPULAR
RIGHT NOW
IN OTHER
COUNTRIES,
BUT NOT SO
MUCH HERE
IN JAPAN.

...was a
little too
cold for
Punpun.

The
towering
vault
of the
February
sky...



For
now, all
he could
do...



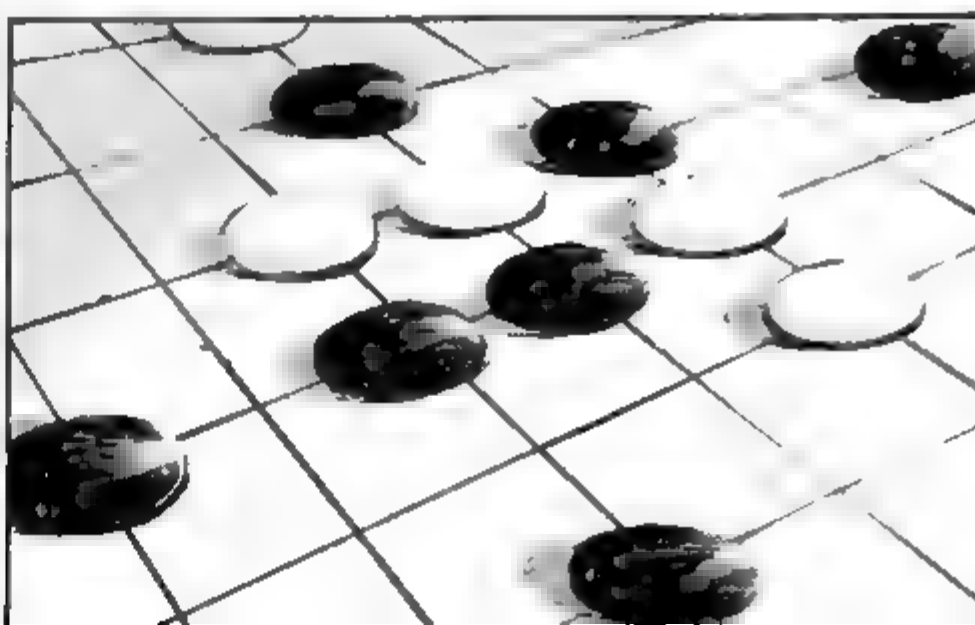
...was
wish
for this
winter
to be
over.



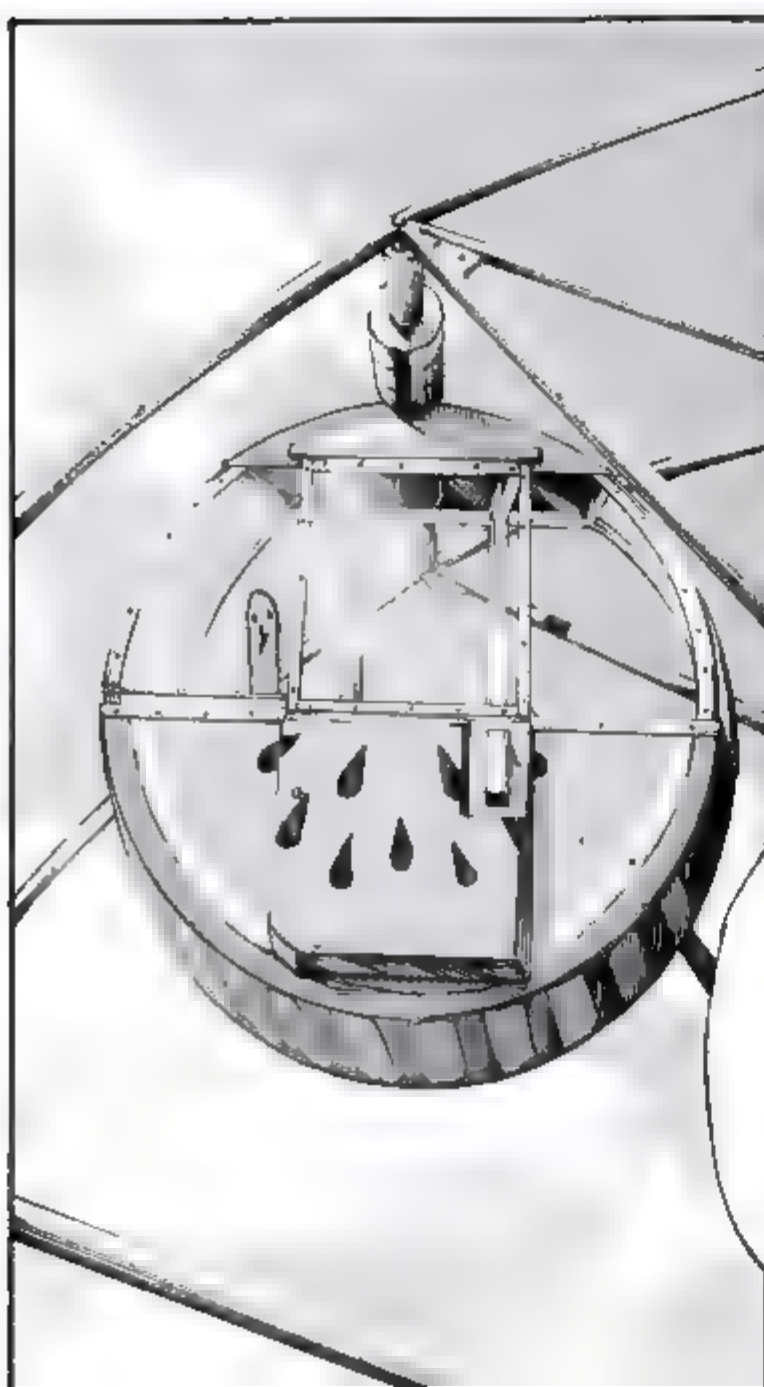
GOOD
ONE!



TH
W
A
K







IT'S SO
PEACEFUL
HERE.

YES,
IT IS.

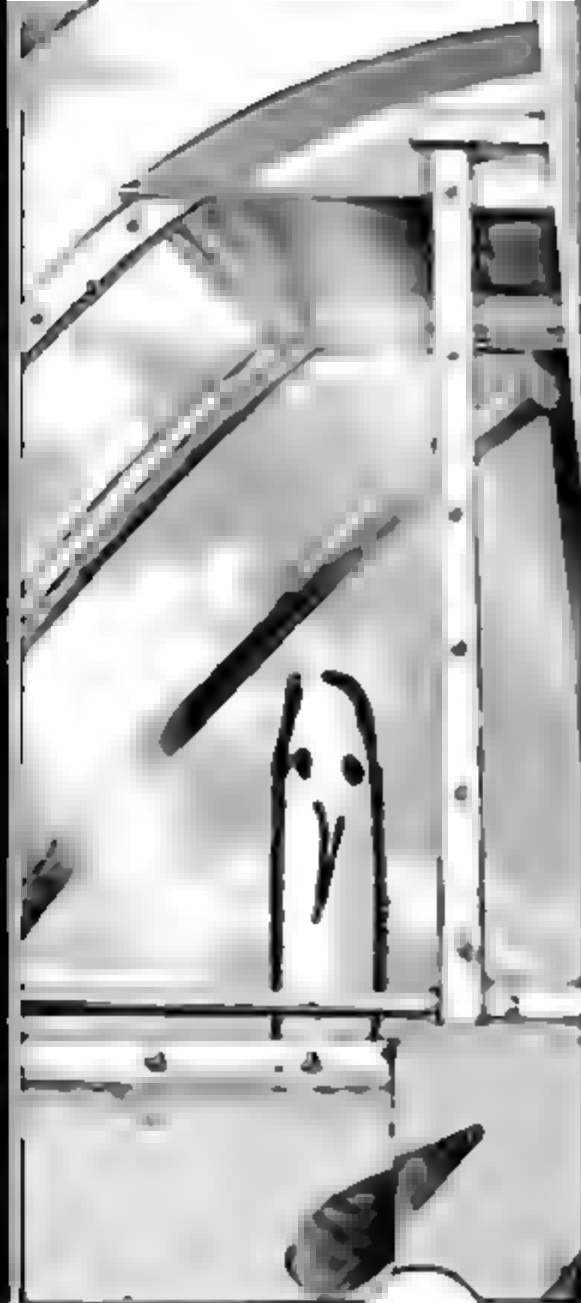


BUT
YOU
KNOW
...

...BEING
SO
EXCES-
SIVELY
HAPPY...

The weather
at the
amusement
park his uncle
and Midori
had brought
him to was
very nice.

The
complete
opposite
of how
Punpun was
feeling.



HEY, HEY,
MIDORI...

...WAS MY
PESSIMISM
CONTAGIOUS?

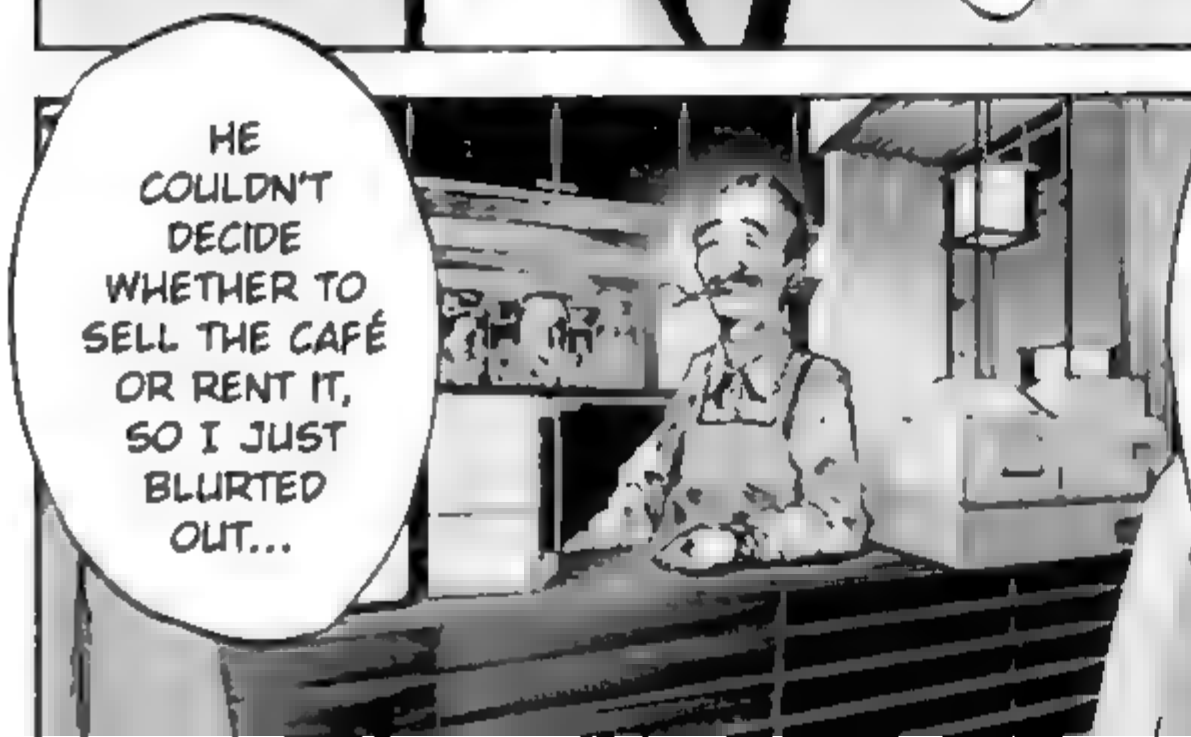
MAKES
YOU
INSECURE

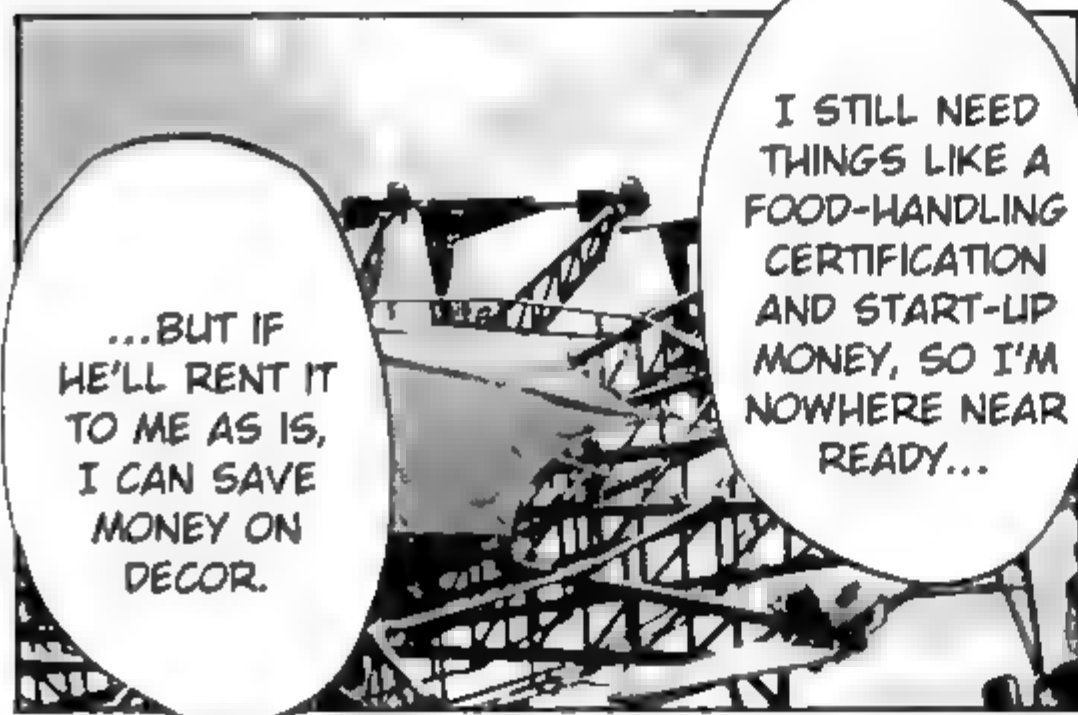
MAKES YOU
WONDER
HOW LONG
THE GOOD
DAYS WILL
LAST.



...SO
MAYBE
WE'RE
MEANT TO
GO ALL
OUT AND
ENJOY IT
WHILE WE
CAN.

TRUE
HAPPINESS
IS A
FLEETING
THING ..



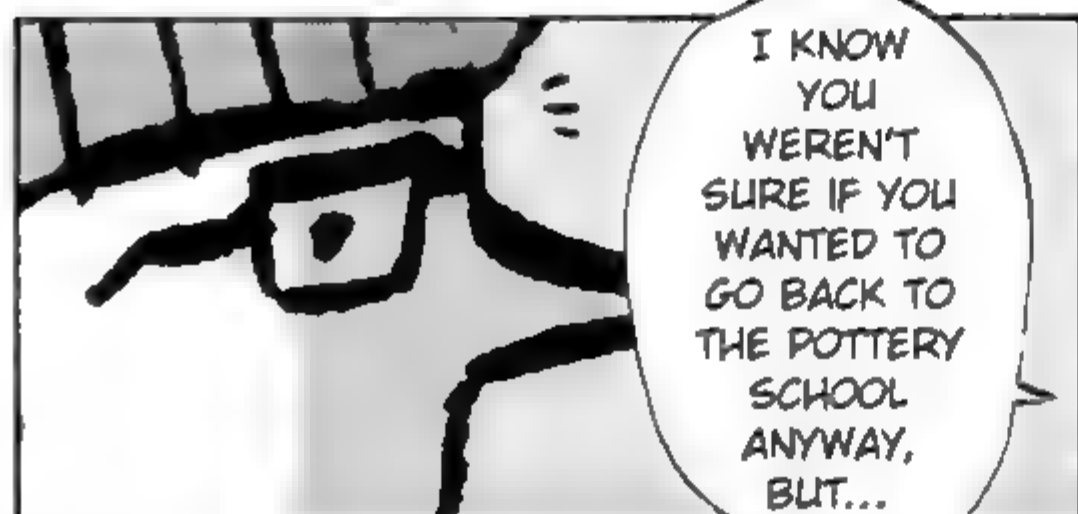


...BUT IF HE'LL RENT IT TO ME AS IS, I CAN SAVE MONEY ON DECOR.

I STILL NEED THINGS LIKE A FOOD-HANDLING CERTIFICATION AND START-UP MONEY, SO I'M NOWHERE NEAR READY...



"WOULD YOU RENT IT TO ME?"



I KNOW YOU WEREN'T SURE IF YOU WANTED TO GO BACK TO THE POTTERY SCHOOL ANYWAY, BUT...



I THOUGHT THAT WOULD BE NICE.

IT'S BEEN A FANTASY OF MINE.

...WHAT IF YOU TEACH AND MAKE YOUR OWN PIECES TOO...

...AND THEN I CAN USE THEM IN MY CAFE...?



...AND HE'LL CUT ME A DEAL ON THE RENT TOO.

AND THE OWNER SAID HE'S OKAY WITH THE IDEA...



MIDORI
...

...YOU'RE
SO
POWERFUL.

I MEAN,
LOOK AT
YOU...

...MAKING
YOUR
DREAMS
COME TRUE.



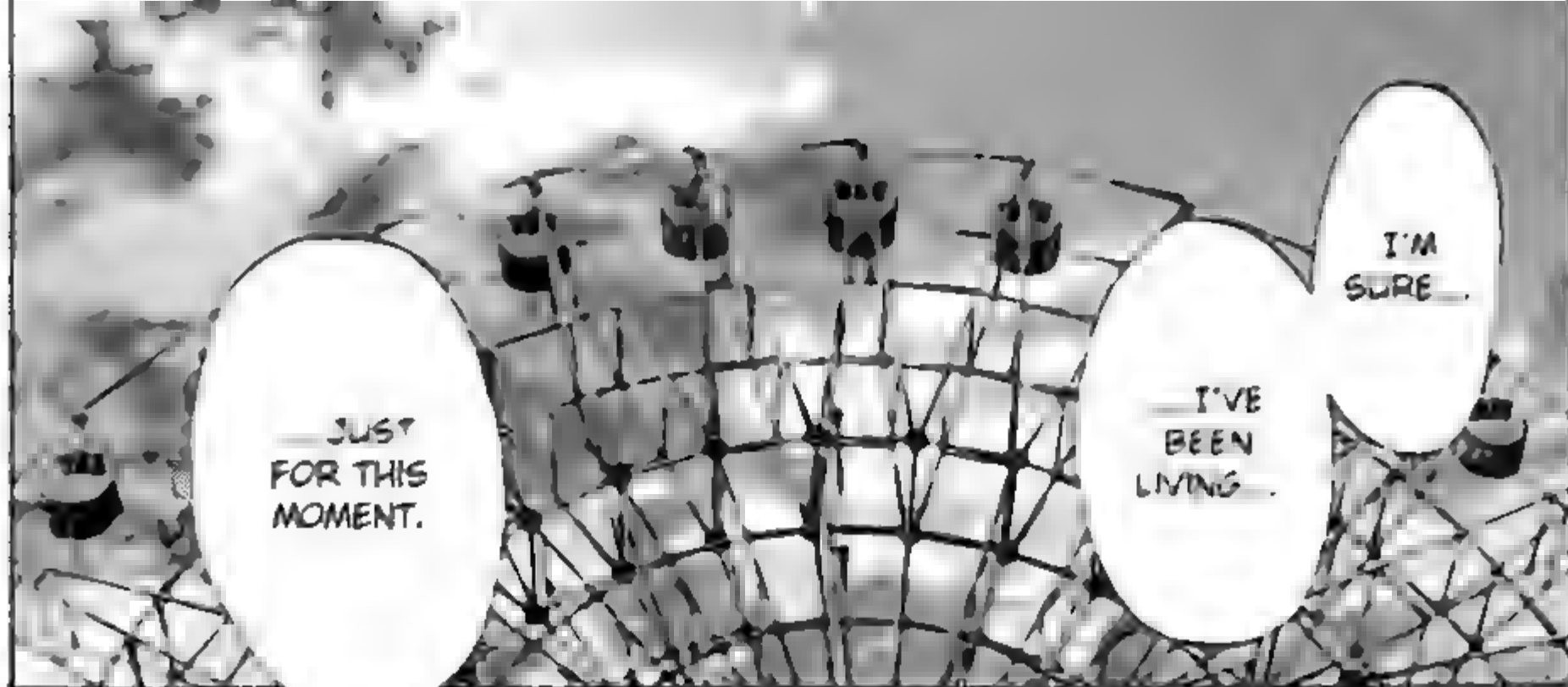
...BUT
JUST
HAVING
YOU
AROUND
MADE ME
HANG IN
THERE.

MIDORI!

I
COULDN'T
HAVE DONE
THIS BY
MYSELF.

NO
WAY...

TO BE
HONEST,
YUICHI,
YOU'RE
NOT VERY
RELIABLE
...



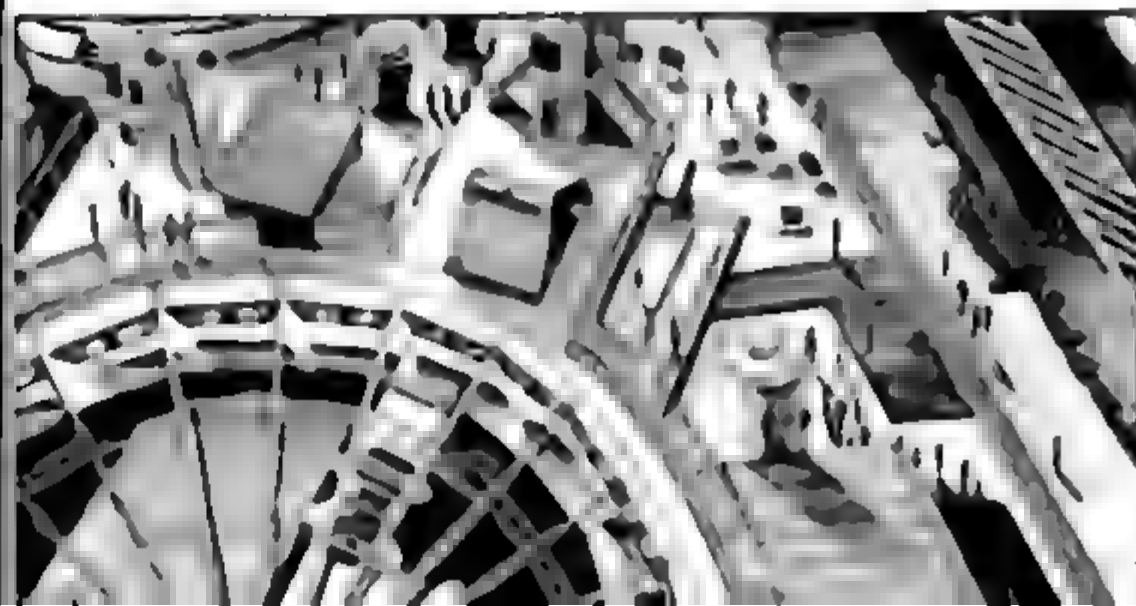
...Punpun
was over-
whelmed.

When he
thought
about how
each little
dot was a
life...

...were
like
little
ants.

The
people, so
far below
the Ferris
wheel...

LET'S
MAKE A
PROMISE





WHEN
THINGS ARE
GOING WELL
FOR BOTH
OF US...

...LET'S
GET
MARRIED.

...Punpun
was just a
piece of lint
or something
else too
insignificant
to notice.

And to
those
looking
up at
him...

ISN'T
THAT WHAT
YOU SAID
TO YOUR
EX-GIRL-
FRIEND?

OH

HEY

IT'S
REAL

THIS
TIME

...so that
was okay
with him.

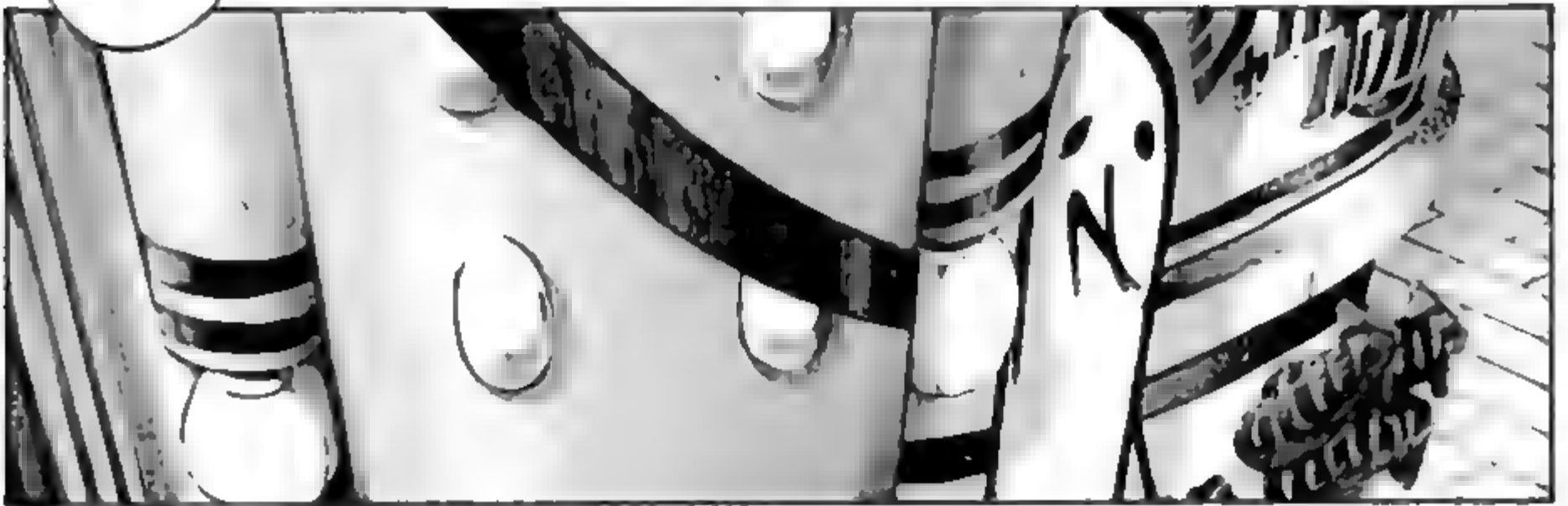
Punpun
was
brave...

But
then why
did the
tears keep
coming?

...but the only
thing that
happened was
the end of
the ride got
closer.

He
thought
and he
thought...

I'M SO
SORRY.





I
THOUGHT
SO.

PHEH,
DIE!

YOU
SHOULD
HAVE
ASKED ME—
I WOULD'VE
TOTALLY
DITCHED
WORK.

SIGH...
AMUSE-
MENT
PARK...?

OH,
YUICHI
FELL
ASLEEP.

BUT
IT WAS
FULL OF
COUPLES.

WELL



WELL THEN,
WHAT WOULD
YOU LIKE
FOR DINNER
TOMORROW?
I'LL MAKE
WHATEVER
YOU WANT.

OH, IN THAT
CASE, MAYBE
I'LL LEAVE
WORK A LITTLE
EARLY AND
PICK UP SOME
GROCERIES
ON THE WAY
HOME.



I DON'T
KNOW, I
ALREADY
SPEND SO
MUCH TIME
HERE.

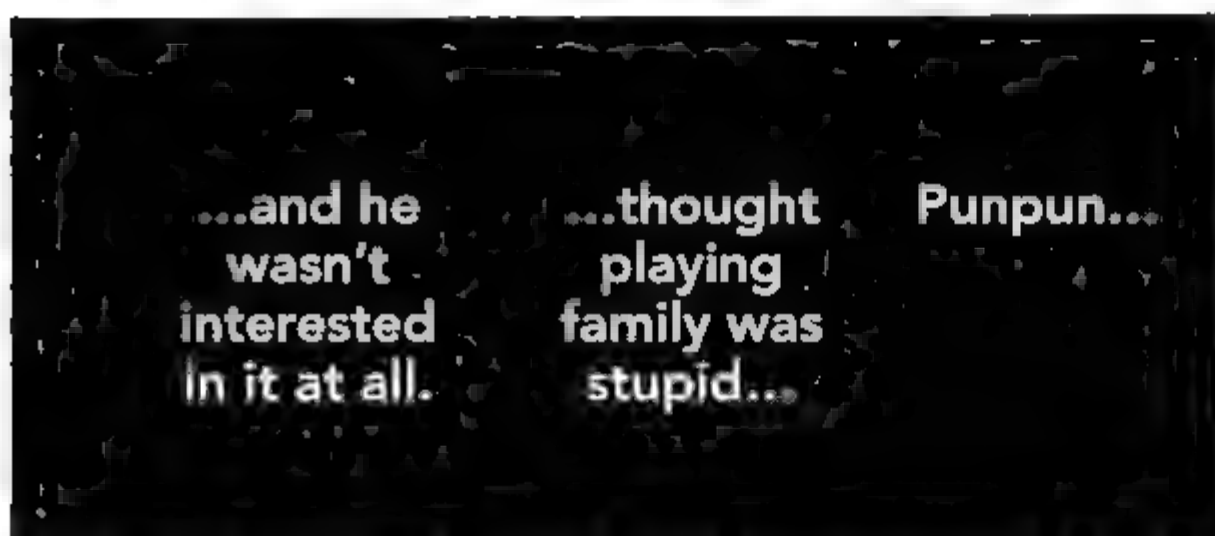
YOU
WANNA
DRINK
THE NIGHT
AWAY
AND GIRL
TALK?

SO,
MIDORI,
HOW
ABOUT
TONIGHT
...?



YOU'RE
A GREAT
COOK, SO
JUST MOVE
IN, WHY
DON'T
YOU?!

SO
WHAT? I
TOLD YOU,
I DON'T
MIND.





I'M
LEAVING
IT BY THE
DOOR.

YOUR
MOM
WANTED
ME TO
GIVE
YOU THIS
LETTER.

Punpun so
angry he
didn't even
want to
open the
envelope.

The idea of his dad just
happily writing about
outer space and the
Yomiuri Giants without
giving what Punpun
was going through a
second thought...



"I'M IN MY
SECOND YEAR
OF MIDDLE
SCHOOL, AND I
FINALLY HAVE A
GIRLFRIEND. I
SUCCEEDED IN
HOLDING HER
HAND ON OUR
LAST DATE.

SO
YOUR
LETTER
IS FROM
SPACE MAN.



Punpun
was
studying
hard
these
days.

No
particular
reason.
It was
calming.

...and
then he'd
join an
under-
ground
organiza-
tion
devoted
to
studying
nuclear
power...

Punpun
was going
to study
hard and
get into
the Tokyo
University
science
depart-
ment.

Whee!
Boom!

As if—
that's
a big
lie...!

Then he'd
destroy the
world.



←Distressed
Angel ☆ Pie

What's
the best
way for
me to
go on?

I have no
dreams.
I have no
girlfriend.

In the
dead of
night, I can
hear my
uncle
and his
girlfriend
doing it.

My
parent are
divorced
because
my dad
was
abusive,
and my
mom is an
alcoholic.

Hello,
I'm a
boy in
the first
year of
middle
school.



Punpun
was truly
saddened
that God
couldn't
come up with
something
sensitive
to say.



*You're the
one who calls
me God.*

*Hey,
what
are you
implying
?!*

...who
are
you?

Then...







...a bitter wind
was blowing
through the
night-drenched
neighborhood.

Even
though it
was almost
spring...



There
was no
such
thing as
endless
winter.

Spring
would
definitely
arrive
soon.

And if not
tomorrow,
then the next
day or the
next month
or in a few
years...

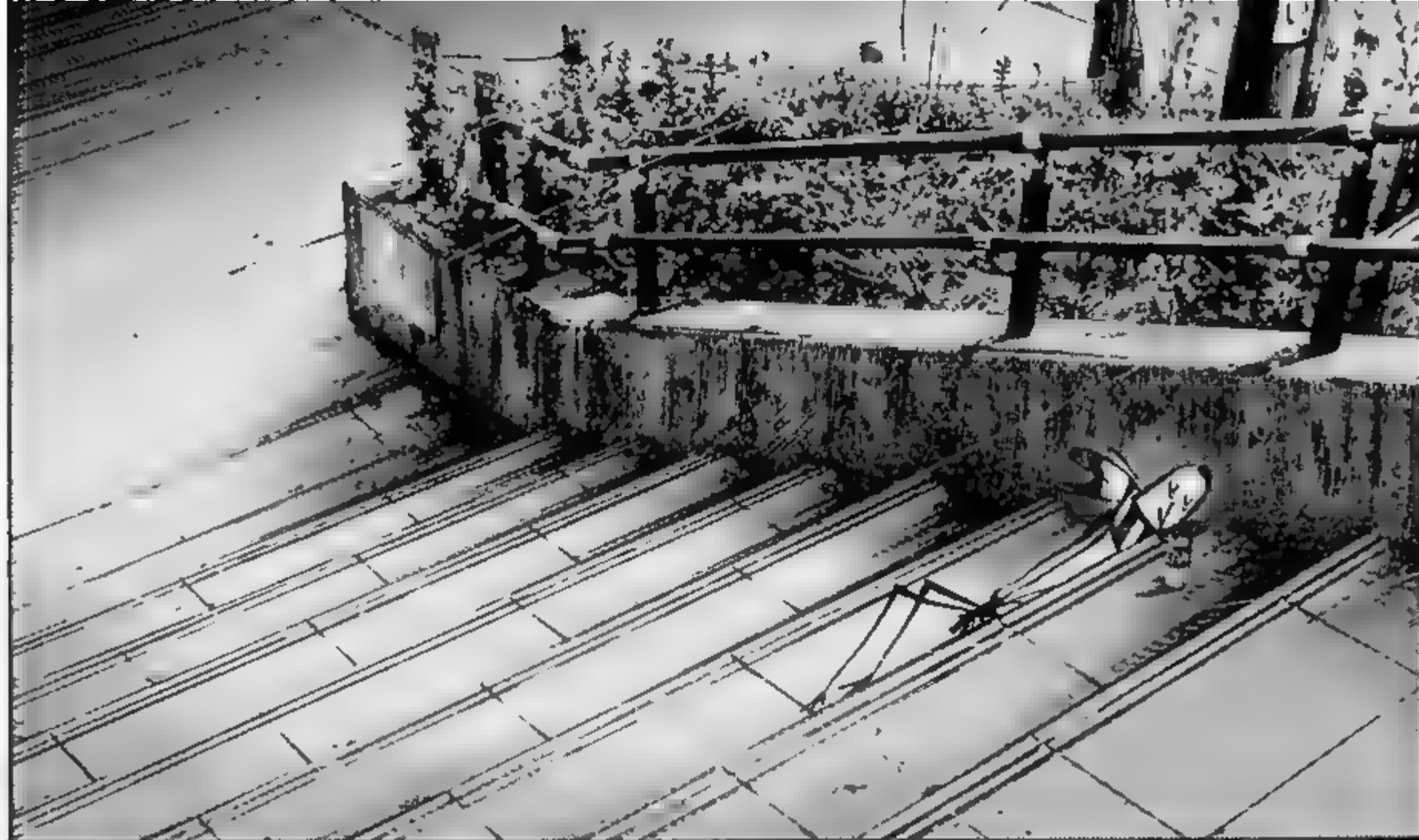
...there
would be an
unbelievably
wonderful
day...

That's
what he
wanted
to
believe.



...some-
thing
unbeliev-
ably
wonderful
must be
about to
happen
tomorrow.

Punpun
was sure
that
because
today had
been so
terrible...



But to
whom?

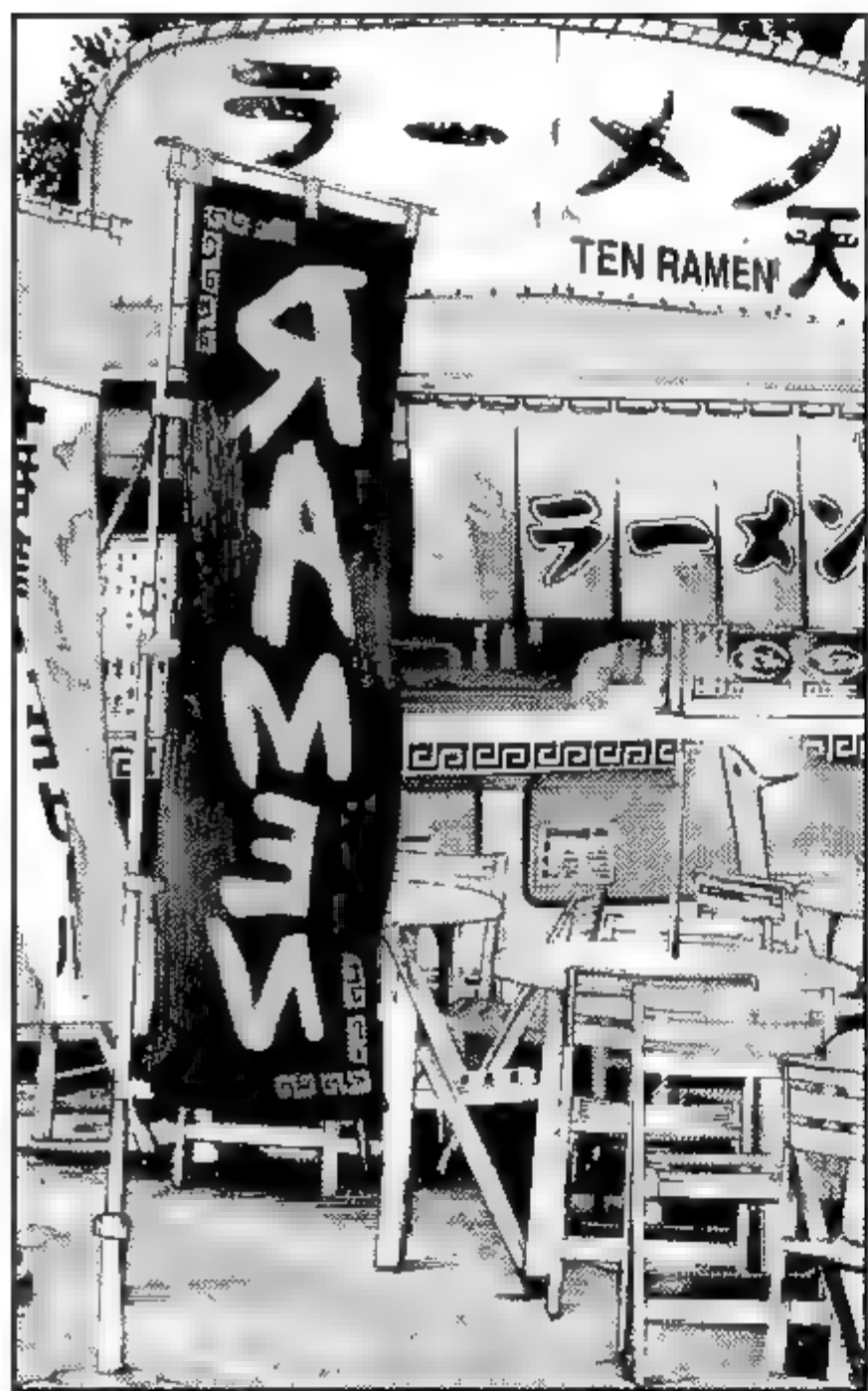
It was
like a
prayer...

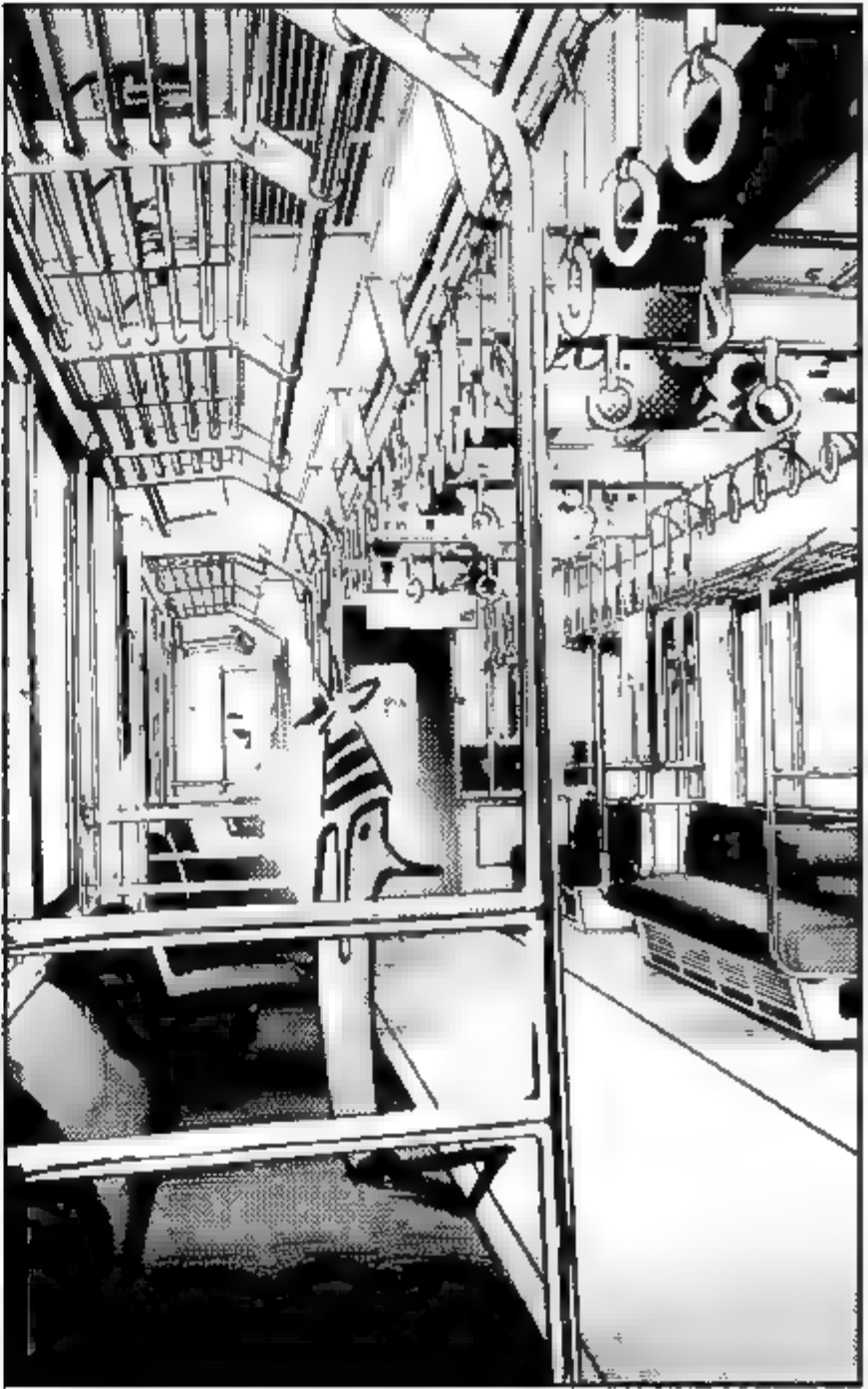


Goodnight,
Punpun.

...just
go to
sleep.

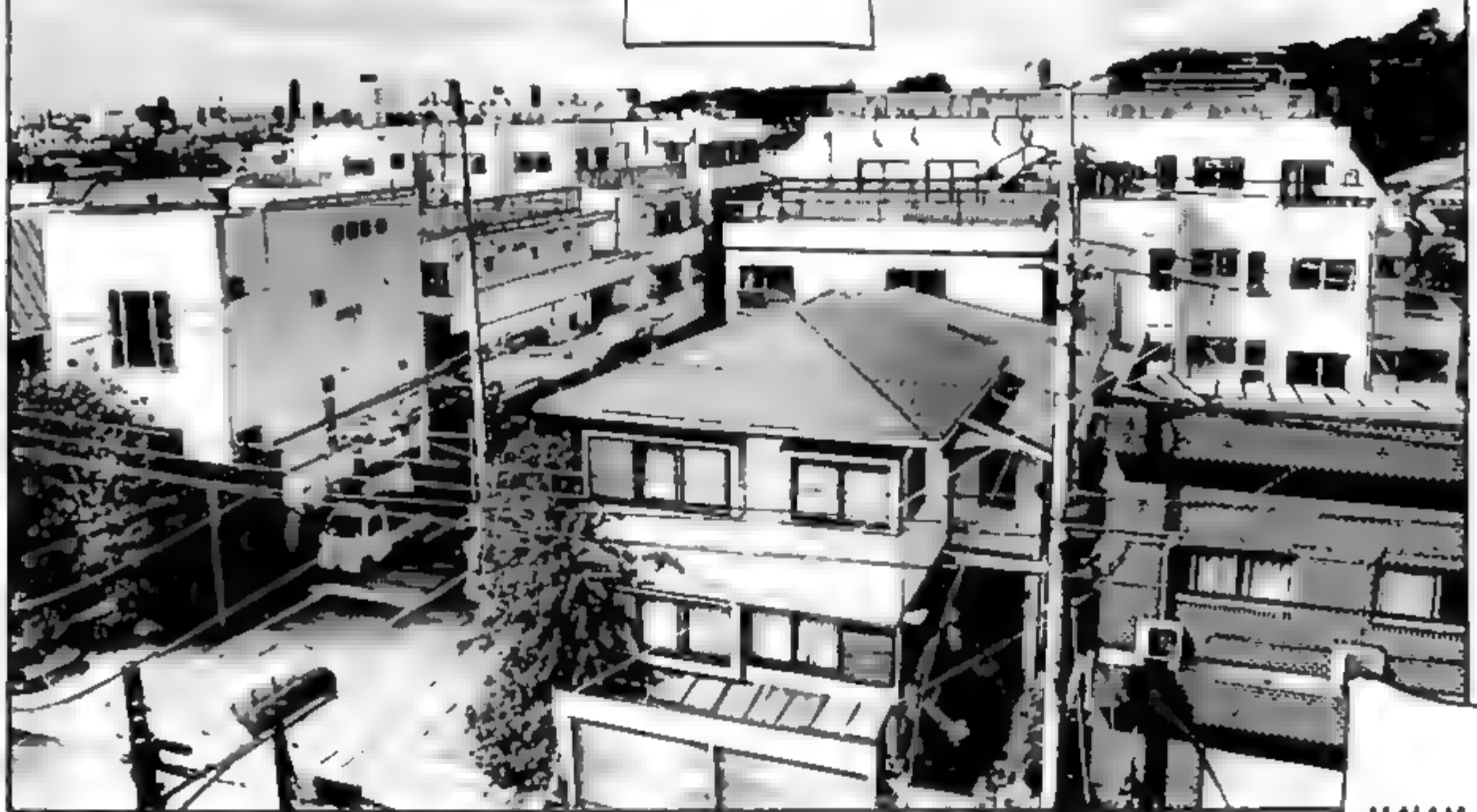
For
now...



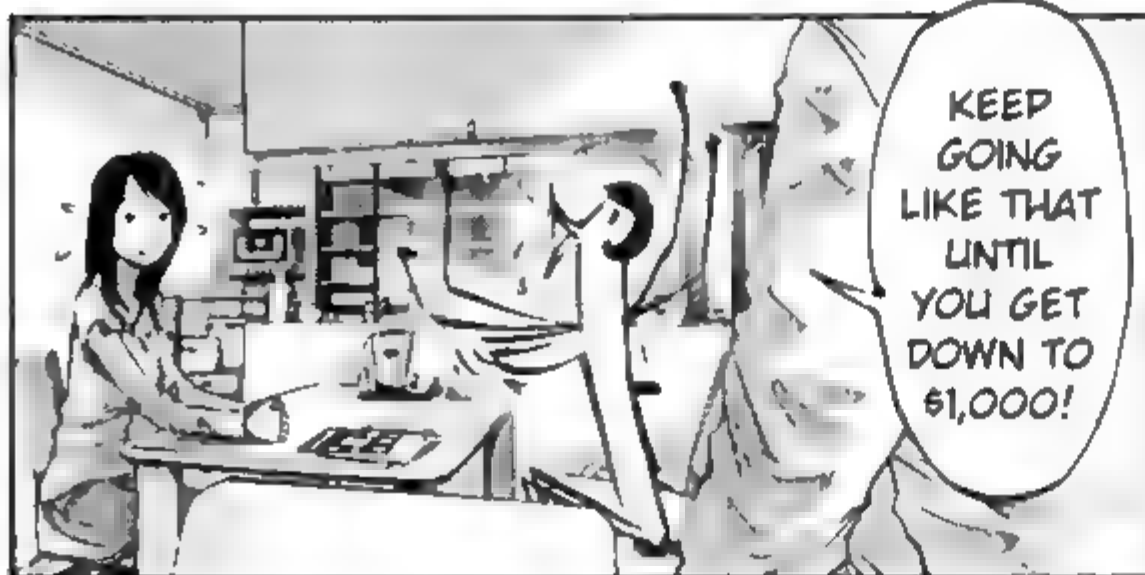




Two
years
later



MA'AM
...



KEEP
GOING
LIKE THAT
UNTIL
YOU GET
DOWN TO
\$1,000!



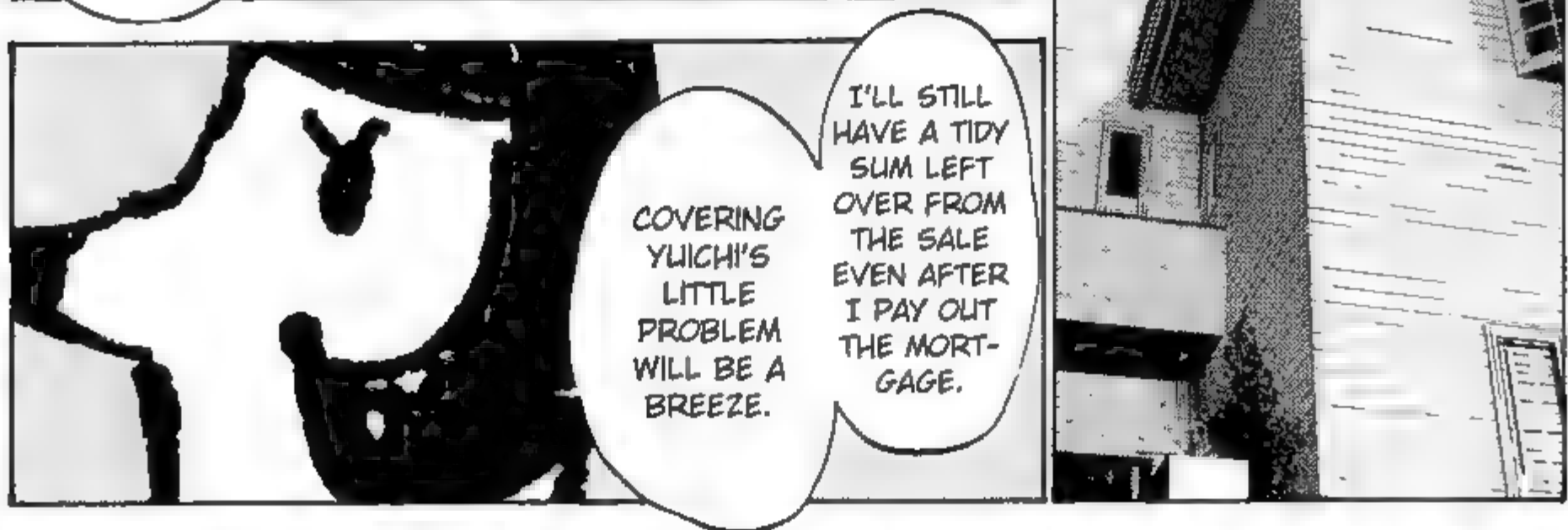
I
DID
IT!

HOW
ABOUT
\$1,300,
FURNITURE
PADS
INCLUDED.

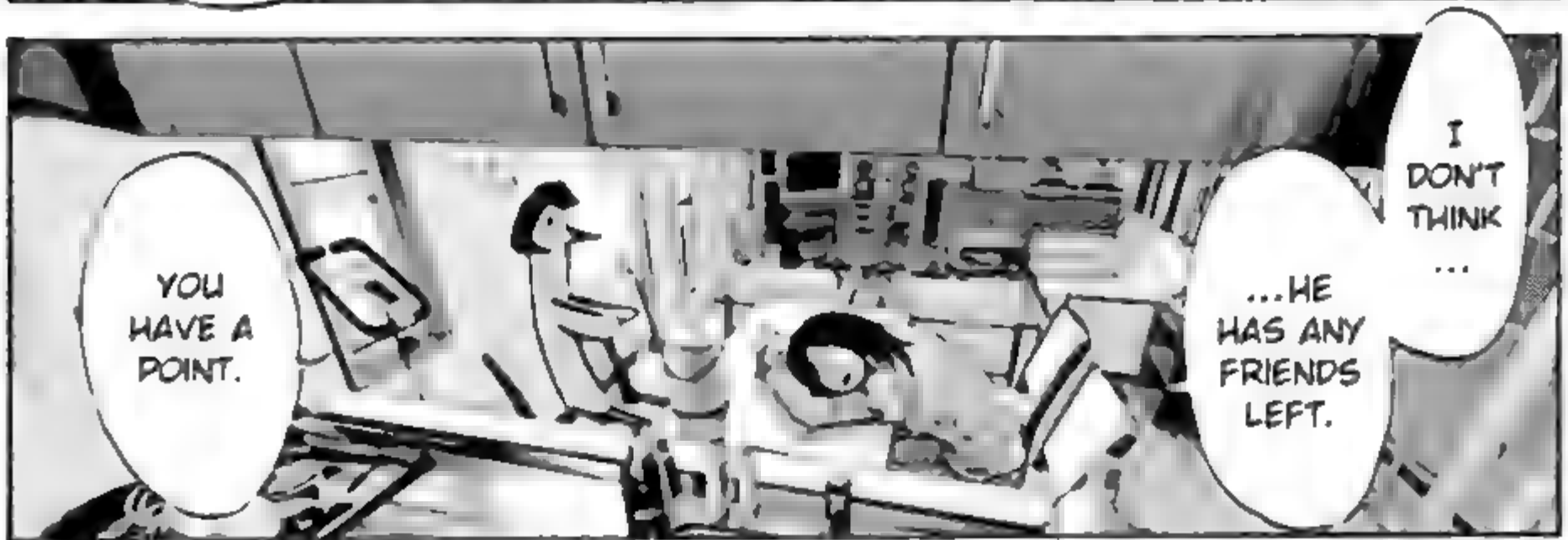


W-
WHAT
...?!

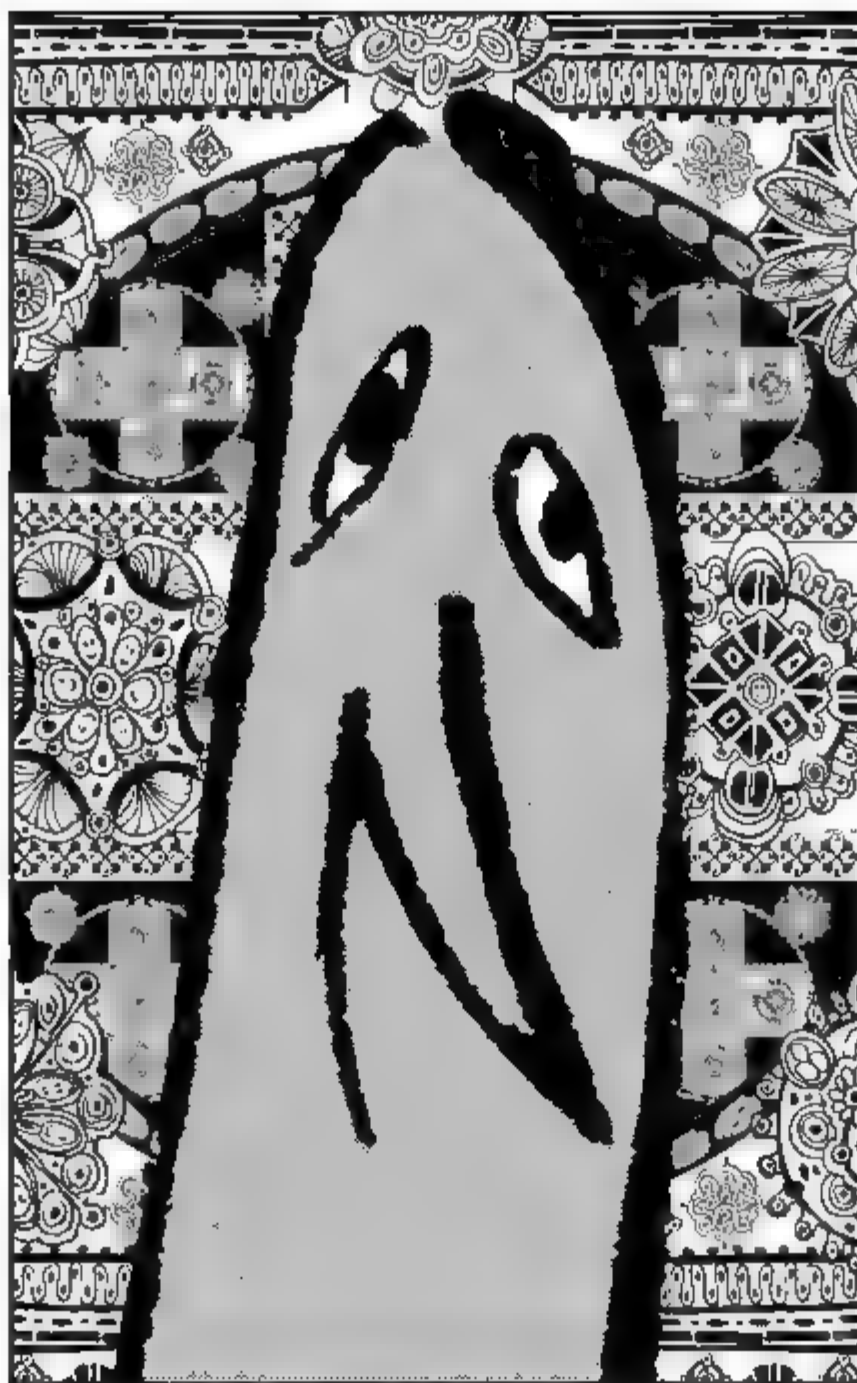
WHOA!











GOODNIGHT PUNPUN INIO ASANO
Part Four

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CG ASSISTANT	Hisashi Saito
COOPERATION	Kumatsuto Yasumasa Iwama Yu Uehara Takashi Kume

AHHHCHOO!!

ACHOO!

AH...

ACHOOO!

AH...!

ACHOO
!!

AH...!

AHH
...

...
CHOO!

ACHOO!

ACHOOO!

ACHOO!



INIO ASANO, a bona fide earthling, was born in Ibaraki, Japan, in 1980. In 2001, his short story "Uchu kara Konnichiwa" (Hello from Outer Space) won the first Sunday GX Rookie Prize. Later, GX published his series *Subarashi Sekai*, available in English from VIZ Media as *What a Wonderful World!* His other works include *Hikari no Machi* (City of Light), *Nijigahara Holograph* and *Umibe no Onna no Ko* (A Girl on the Shore), as well as *solanin*, also available from VIZ Media.

GOODNIGHT PUNPUN

Volume 2

VIZ Signature Edition

Story and Art by INIO ASANO

OYASUMI PUNPUN Vol. 3, 4

by Inio ASANO

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Original Japanese edition published by SHOGAKUKAN.

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SHOGAKUKAN.

Translation ☆ JN PRODUCTIONS

Touch-Up Art & Lettering ♡ ANNALIESE CHRISTMAN

Design ♡ FAWN LAU

Editor ☆ PANCHA DIAZ

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Printed in the U.S.A.

Published by VIZ Media, LLC

P.O. Box 77010

San Francisco, CA 94107

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

First printing, June 2016



www.viz.com

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